

THE

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NOVEMBER, 1817.

MEMOIR
OF THE LATE REV. THOMAS PRICE,
PASTOR OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT
YEovil, SOMERSET.

THE subject of this memoir was born in the city of Gloucester in the year 1760, of pious parents; (who within a year after his birth removed to Bristol, for the purpose of enjoying a greater plenitude of the means of grace.) By them he was brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by example and precept they endeavoured to instil into his mind the principles of religion and virtue. At the age of seven years he was sent to school in Wales, and after some time in Bristol: here nothing remarkable occurred till he arrived at the age of twelve or thirteen; only (to use his own words) he discovered, amidst every privilege, a corrupt disposition and depraved heart, though not without repeated checks of conscience. About the above-mentioned period he began to be much alarmed, viewing himself as an undone sinner; he resolved to amend his life, forsook his juvenile pleasures, associated with the serious, attended the means of grace, made conscience of prayer, and being religiously edu-

cated, could talk so as to delight and astonish those with whom he associated. Under the influence of self-righteous principles, he thought himself a fit subject for admission to the privileges of the church, but his experience, and knowledge of divine things, would not bear investigation. This, as he expressed it, wounded his pharisaic pride, and from this time he grew remiss in his duties, stifled his convictions, associated with those who made a mock at religion both in theory and practice, and being "led captive by the devil at his will," he imbibed their principles, and indulged in their vices, till at length, he became quite impatient of parental restraint, and at the age of fifteen secretly left home in order to go to London, but returned in a short time to the arms of his sorrowing parents. It was not long, however, before he went from them again, remained in London a short time, and once more returned a welcome prodigal to his father's house. For some time he kept his promises of amendment, and

many petitions were preferred to the throne of mercy by his anxious friends on his account. Notwithstanding the most affectionate remonstrances and earnest entreaties, he was fully bent on quitting the paternal roof, and going to sea: in pursuance of this design, he shipped himself on board a vessel bound to the West Indies, but the ship's crew being found to exceed her necessary complement, he (to his great mortification) was put ashore with the most useless hands; but being resolved to go, he entered on board a privateer, and sailed from Bristol in June, 1779, and after cruising four months, he was sent home in a very weak condition in consequence of a fever: after recovering strength, he again embarked in the same ship. In this voyage he suffered much in body and mind, as he was in a very severe engagement, at which time his soul was filled with horror, expecting, every gun, to be plunged into hell as the just reward of his crimes. At another time, a dreadful tempest in the Bay of Biscay almost drove him to desperation; so that the tempest without was but an emblem of that within. Soon after, they were near being wrecked on one of the western islands: from so many dangers, he concluded he was a Jonah in the ship. But it did not end here; they were obliged to surrender to a superior force on Whit Tuesday, 1780, and were carried prisoners to Cadiz in Spain. Here he remained two months, when an exchange of prisoners took place, and he was put on board a British ship: however, they were retaken, with considerable loss, shortly after; and here he was stripped of every thing he possessed, but

a shirt and pair of canvass trowsers, which were all his clothing during a long march from Carthage to Ronda, in the month of August or September, having neither shoes to guard his feet from the scorching sands and flinty mountains with which the country abounds, or hat to shelter him from the sun. At Ronda he was cast into a loathsome prison, his shirt and trowsers his only clothing by day, and bedding by night, for at least nine months. The remainder of his stay was rendered somewhat more tolerable, by his acquiring a knowledge of the language, and obtaining some employment. In the course of his imprisonment he suffered much from remorse of conscience, and reflection on the wretched condition to which his own folly had reduced him. Many good resolutions for the future were also formed, but they proved like Samson's bands—"broken as tow touched with the fire."

The period of his release at length arrived, and in December, 1782, he left Spain, and, after a long and tedious journey by sea and land, he was, by the good hand of God, restored once more to the bosom of his family, after an absence of three years.

It was not many months after his return that the Lord was pleased to call him by his grace; although for some time neither the distresses he had experienced, the goodness and forbearance of God, or the most salutary advice and earnest entreaties, made any impression on his mind, but he continued an enemy to God by wicked works: but the appointed season came that his progress should be arrested, and the voice of mercy said, "Hitherto shalt thou go, but no further."

At this time, August, 1783, he engaged with a serious young man to go to Kingswood to hear the Rev. Matthew Wilkes's farewell sermon; his design in this was "to see what an odd figure the country people would make in a Methodist meeting-house." With these views he arrived at the house of God: Mr. Wilkes took his text from Lamentations, iii. 51, "Mine eye affecteth mine heart," from which he took occasion to observe, how the eye of pious parents affected their hearts, when they saw their children in the broad road to destruction. This touched his conscience, and he stood condemned. The preacher shewed, also, how the eye of God affected HIS heart, when from eternity he saw his people in the ruins of the fall, and provided for their salvation; also, that the eye of Christ so affected HIS heart, that he engaged as their surety, veiled himself in human flesh, suffered, bled, and died for their redemption: this was accompanied with divine power to his soul; he was filled with astonishment that his eye, which had witnessed so much of the power and mercy of God, had not affected his heart to love and serve him; and while he trembled for the consequences of his guilt, a ray of hope beamed into his soul, that it was possible the compassionate eye and heart of Christ had been so affected as to shed tears and blood for him. Is any thing too hard for the Lord? On the morning of the same day, he had, from the window of his dwelling, observed Mr. Wilkes preaching in the court before the tabernacle; "and surely," said he, "never did any person appear so contemptible as Mr. Wilkes did in my eyes; I thought him a madman standing

up to deceive a set of poor, ignorant creatures:" for some little time he continued to listen to him, till filled with diabolical enmity, he turned upon his heel with horrid imprecations on the servant of Christ, who in a few hours after was instrumental in bringing him to the footstool of divine mercy.

In about five or six months after his conversion, (January, 1784) he joined the Baptist church at the Pithay, Bristol, under the pastoral care of the late Rev. Mr. Tommas: from this period nothing important occurred till May, 1785, when he formed a matrimonial connection with one with whom he was already united in church fellowship. This was a source of peculiar satisfaction, as he had felt much the importance of the apostolic exhortation, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," and consequently had earnestly sought divine direction in his choice.

In the year following he left Bristol, and went to reside at Horsley, Gloucestershire, where he lived two years. In the course of his residence there, he felt an irresistible desire to declare unto others that salvation which he himself had experienced; and being much urged thereto by many of his Christian friends, he began his ministerial work in September, 1787, by addressing a small congregation at Tetbury, Gloucestershire, and soon after returned to Bristol. He preached at Keynsham, and other places in the neighbourhood occasionally, till the year 1792, when he removed to Melksham, Wilts, and on his arrival was earnestly solicited to preach at the village of Broughton, about two miles distant, to which he acceded,

preaching in various villages, and supplying several destitute churches, until June, 1793, when he was requested by the Baptist church at Yeovil to supply them a few sabbaths; and after preaching among them about twelve months, was ordained their pastor June, 25, 1794.

This was his first and final station in the militant church his heavenly Master had ordained, and he desired no other. From the time the church at Yeovil became his charge, he appeared to have it in his heart to live and die with the people, whom he sincerely loved, and who were, in general, affectionately and decidedly attached to him. But he had his peculiar trials: at one period of his ministry especially, there sprung up some roots of bitterness, and troubled him sorely; but a sense of duty and disinterested affection were proof against the malignant clamour of unfounded calumny, and the turbulent and quarrelsome spirits of some, who "thought more highly of themselves than they ought to think." Nor could repeated solicitations from other churches induce him to forsake his station, although others promised more mental satisfaction, and would have rendered his pecuniary circumstances more eligible, being resolved, in dependence upon divine aid, to "stand still, and see the salvation of God;" and eventually he had the satisfaction of witnessing the divine interposition in the suppression of discord, the restoration of tranquillity, and the revival and increase of the church.

His attention was particularly directed to the propagation of the gospel in the villages; and towards the close of his life, he had the satisfaction of reaping

more fully the fruits of his indefatigable exertions. In the year 1814, a larger and more commodious place of worship was fitted up, in a village which had witnessed his unwearied labours for more than twenty years; but still "the place was too strait for them," and in the following year was considerably enlarged. About the same time, he had the pleasure of opening a house for divine worship in another village; and in both, the word is still preached to attentive and crowded congregations.

In the course of three years previous to his death, his ardent prayers for the peace and prosperity of the church were evidently answered. Additions were frequent and numerous: about half the present number of members were baptized by him in the above-mentioned period. A mutual and growing attachment subsisted between minister and people, and a pleasing prospect appeared in view, which the all-wise Disposer of events was pleased to becloud, by depriving them of their beloved pastor.

In the autumn of 1816 his health began rapidly to decline; and for the last six months he was seldom able to preach, and when he did, the task was too great for his bodily strength, and caused frequent relapses, which brought him to the verge of the grave. He long had a presentiment that his work was nearly at an end, and he was determined to spend and be spent in the service of his Master. To one of his members, who observed to him on a sabbath morning that he was too weak to preach, he replied, "It will not be long; let me preach as long as I can." He continued to preach occasionally till about a month be-

fore his decease. He commenced his last public exercise by reading hymn 19, book i. of Dr. Watts: when he came to these lines—

“Jesus, the vision of thy face
Hath overpowering charms;
Scarce shall I feel death’s cold embrace,
If Christ be in my arms.
Then while ye hear my heart-strings
break,
How sweet my minutes roll!
A mortal paleness on my cheek,
And glory in my soul.”

he evidently anticipated what he was so soon to realize, and his soul seemed to be absorbed in the prospect. It had for some time been thought by many of his friends, that he was fast ripening for glory.

His conversation was peculiarly spiritual, full of confidence and resignation. Some weeks before his death he said to a friend, “Blessed be God, I am in a prepared state either to live or die; I trust I can say, whenever the summons comes, *I am ready!*”

When asked if he was comfortable, he said “Yes, I have no unbelieving doubts and fears respecting my eternal state.” He would often burst forth into grateful exclamations at the recollection of past mercies: at one time he said, “I am utterly astonished when I reflect on his goodness to one so vile; I suppose there was never a more depraved wretch afloat in a vessel, yet I obtained mercy, and have lived to see some of my children brought to a knowledge of the truth.

* Oh! to grace how great a debtor
Daily I’m constrain’d to be.”

For the last fortnight his death was daily and hourly expected, and he calmly awaited its approach; yet he expressed a wish

to live to see all his children, three of whom were in London. His wishes were realized: on the Lord’s-day, Feb. 23, the whole of his family assembled around his bed, and after severally addressing them in a most impressive manner, he said, “Now, as soon as my heavenly Father will, I am ready.” On Tuesday evening following, after conversing some time with his family, it was apparent that the exertion had been too much for his strength and spirits; and in this exhausted state the adversary watched his opportunity, and “came in like a flood:” for about two hours the conflict was severe; the repetition of the most consoling truths was in vain, Satan appeared to triumph, till at length “the spirit of the Lord lifted a standard against him;” for a few minutes he appeared dozing, and then exclaimed, “I have had a view!” Being asked, of what? he said, “Calvary!” his soul was instantaneously tranquillized, and while he expressed the anguish he had endured, he gratefully acknowledged his obligations to HIM who had “covered his head in the day of battle.” This was the only time, during his last illness, that the enemy was permitted to shake his confidence. He was “fearless of hell and ghastly death,” and was enabled to look into eternity with joyful anticipation. When speaking of some temporal affairs to his family, something occurring relative to the house in which he dwelt, he said, “I have done with it now; my house is on high: I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” To a friend, who asked the state of his mind, he said, “My witness is on high—my record is there.” For several

days previous to his departure he spoke but seldom; his weakness was extreme, and his powers of articulation almost failed. One evening, with much animation, though in broken language, he exclaimed, "I long to be gone—the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and are safe: I have found it so—I am his—he chose me from eternity, redeemed me by blood—ten thousand precious promises, all yea and amen." Seeing some of his family in tears, he said, "Weep not for me; go to the throne of grace."

Till within a few days of his dissolution he suffered but little pain, nor was he insensible of the favour. "My blessed Jesus," said he, "deals very gently with me; I have little or no pain, but am very weak: he seems to be taking down my tabernacle by little and little." In the course of the last week, his bodily sufferings were great, which he bore with truly Christian fortitude: when his pain was most acute, he was led to view his suffering Saviour, and his own affliction appeared light and momentary. He was perfectly sensible till a few hours before he died; and even then, at intervals, gave sufficient indications that his end was peace. Just before he breathed his last, he attempted to say much, but it was little more than inarticulate sounds: he was evidently engaged in audible prayer; the last words he was distinctly heard to utter were, "Amen!" several times repeated, and in a few minutes he gently breathed out his spirit into the hands of him to whom he had committed it, on the 12th of March, 1817, in the 56th year of his age. On the succeeding Wednesday his remains were deposited in the

meeting-yard, and on the following sabbath Mr. Toms, of Chard, preached his funeral sermon to a crowded audience, in the Independent chapel, from Psalm xvii. 15, which had been long selected by himself for the occasion. In the evening, Mr. Taylor, the Independent minister, delivered a sermon on the occasion, from Heb. xi. 4, "He being dead yet speaketh." On that and the following sabbath, many other funeral sermons were preached in the neighbourhood, by ministers, both Independents and Baptists.

We shall close this memoir with a few observations on the character of the deceased, which are to be considered rather as simple facts than an eulogium. He was possessed of a sound judgment; his views of truth were decided and perspicuous. When any brother minister has preached for him, and he has been a hearer, he has frequently, towards the close of the discourse, taken his pencil, and composed a hymn suitable to the subject; indeed, he was in the habit of composing his own hymns, a great many of which he has left behind him, and also several poems, odes, &c. He was faithful and affectionate in the discharge of relative, social, and ministerial duties; in fine, he was, in the most extensive sense of the word, AN HONEST MAN, and as such justly respected, beloved, and lamented. The prolongation of such a life would appear peculiarly desirable, but it was otherwise designed by Him, whose "thoughts are not as our thoughts." He had "accomplished as an hireling his day"—"he had fought the good fight, kept the faith, and finished his course with joy."

THE MERIT AND EFFICACY
OF THE
SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST,
FOUNDED ON THE
DIVINE DIGNITY OF HIS PERSON.

(From a Circular Letter (abridged) drawn up by the late Rev. Robert Hall, of Arnsby, and addressed to the churches, from the Baptist ministers and messengers, assembled at Kettering, May 27, 28, 29, 1788.)

— WE would remind you, that *from the divine dignity of Christ arises the merit and efficacy of his sufferings*. The efficacy of what he did and endured, bears a proportion to his infinite worth. Deity and humanity uniting in him, he became a fit person to act on man's behalf as a substitute, surety, and Saviour. We say *fit*, because he, and he only, could properly merit by obedience and death. The obedience of the most exalted creatures is naturally due to their Creator. There is, therefore, nothing in their most perfect compliance with his will that deserves a reward. They are utterly incapable of *merit* in any higher sense than what is called merit of *congruity*; or, they can never lay claim to any reward, but in consequence of a previous condescending agreement. Hence a paction, or covenant with them, is ever presupposed, when we speak of their meriting even by perfect obedience. This is absolutely necessary, not in order that they should be bound to *obey* (to *that* they are under a natural and necessary obligation,) but in order to their having any claim or title to the *reward*, which is only due, by a gracious promise, sovereignly made in their favour.

But the Son of God was under no natural obligation to act as

a servant, as creatures are. *His* appearing in such a form was entirely optional, the effect of his own choice. "He who thought it no robbery to be equal with God, took upon himself the form of a servant; humbled himself," and became "obedient unto death." Being voluntarily made that which he naturally was not. His obedience was the effect of his own spontaneous condescension, in assuming our nature for that end. On account of his native original dignity, a paction or agreement was necessary, in order to his *obeying*, but *not* to render his obedience *meritorious*. Such is the native littleness of creatures, and their natural obligation to obedience, as the dependent subjects of God's universal government, that merit cannot take place in them, but only in consequence of the sovereign condescension of the Lawgiver, engaging to reward the obedience to which he had a previous claim: but the obedience of the Son of God being the result of his own voluntary engagement, has an intrinsic merit founded upon his natural greatness, and prior dignity, as Lord of all, and upon the *essential equity* of the moral Governor of the world. His merit, therefore, is of a higher kind than that of Adam, or of angels, could ever have been. We conceive it is properly a *merit of condignity*, which, in its *own nature*, (and not barely upon the ground of a previous promise,) *deserves* a reward: hence he is said to *purchase* his people, and they are said to be *bought by him*; and what he did and endured is emphatically called a *price*. By the *price* of his precious blood, (*God's own blood*, Acts, xx. 28,) redemption was obtained, and the release of

the captives secured, for whom he gave himself a ransom.

It was owing to his dignity that the law under which he came is magnified and made honourable, in its precept and penalties, by his obedience unto death. God, in human nature, has given an awful and solemn proof of his impartiality, and infinite regard to equity, in doing as a subject what he requires as a sovereign. He has shown to the universe that he has done as he would be done by.

We wish, dear brethren, that while you contemplate the wonderful *constitution* of your Redeemer's person, as God and man, you may feel your hearts glow with holy gratitude for the *substitution* of one so wonderfully great and gracious, to act in your stead, as made under the law in your behalf, and standing in your place at the tremendous bar of justice. These are the pillars (so to speak) which support the important doctrine of *imputation*.*

* Imputation makes no alteration in the personal characters of the parties concerned. Christ was not thereby tainted with sin; he was not morally worse through sin's being placed to his account. He personally was the unvariable object of the Father's delight, and never more lovely in his eye than when groaning in the garden, or bleeding, as a victim, on the cross. But through imputation he was, in his people's stead, treated in a manner infinitely different from the desert of his personal character. In like manner, the imputation of Christ's righteousness does not constitute personal holiness; sinners, to whom it is imputed, are in a *safer state*, but not thereby made better men. Though justified in Christ, they are ungodly as in themselves. Thus Divine *grace* shines with infinite lustre, in treating sinners inconceivably better than corresponds with their real personal character; while *imputation* of righteousness does not supersede, or render unnecessary the *implantation* of holiness in the hearts of men. The effects of grace in a man, are the

without the idea of which we know not how to reconcile the treatment of Christ, and of his people, by the supreme Lawgiver, to the rules of equity and good government, by which protection is insured to the innocent, and punishment prepared for the guilty. Your divine Saviour had power over his own life, which no mere creature has. It was not violently taken from him without his consent, but voluntarily laid down for his sheep. He agreed to be made an offering for sin. To fall by the hands of punitive justice, the just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God. And that the whole transaction might appear strictly judicial, and every way right and equitable, sin was imputed to him, and charged or reckoned to his account. With his full consent, Jehovah laid upon him the iniquity of us all, and he bore it in his own body on the tree. Hence the world, which God went about to reconcile to himself by his Son, had not their trespasses imputed to them: but, on the contrary, "he made him to be sin, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. v. 18—21. This procedure was pointed out under the former figurative dispensation, which was to Israel a shadow of good things to come. Salvation from outward calamities, threatened by God, as their civil governor, in case of disobedience, could only be obtained by sacrifice; the crimes of the

only evidences of righteousness being imputed to him. But inherent grace is no part of that righteousness of which it is an evidence. Through *righteousness* special blessings are *procured*; and through *holiness* they are *enjoyed*. Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works.

offender being first ceremoniously transferred to the intended victim, by the imposition of the hands of the priest, Lev. viii. 14. But these sacrifices could never take away sin, as pertaining to the conscience. However they might avert or remove *temporal* judgment, they were not sufficient to secure from the *wrath to come*. But Jesus, who gave himself a sacrifice for sins, "by one offering hath for ever perfected them that were sanctified."

The completeness of Christ's atonement is the reason assigned why there needeth no repetition of his sufferings.

In the sacrifices of the legal dispensation, "there was," saith the apostle, "a remembrance again made of sins every year, because it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins;" but with what pleasure does the inspired writer dwell upon the glorious contrast? Christ, says he, was *once* offered to bear the sins of many—*once* in the end of the world, &c.—*once* for all—he offered *one* sacrifice for sin—by *one* offering, &c. see Heb. ix. and x. wherein this important subject is treated of at large.

If the evil of sin, the holiness of God, and the equity of his law and government, were duly considered, and deeply impressed on the hearts of men, surely they would not take pleasure in depreciating the *person of Christ*, but would gladly embrace him as the great high-priest over the house of God, infinitely superior to every predecessor in that office. For "neither by the blood of goats nor calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained *eternal redemption* for us." Heb. ix. 12. "Almost all things are

by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary, that the patterns (or representations) of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." Heb. ix. 22, 23. According to the apostle's reasoning, the sacrifice of Christ was as much better than all those sacrifices which were offered before, even by Divine appointment, as *eternal* redemption is superior to *temporal* deliverance. As the former is infinitely greater, that by which it was obtained must be infinitely better.

Some, who discard the idea of Christ's *divinity*, profess to retain the doctrine of his *atonement*, supposing the efficacy of his sufferings to have arisen, not from his *personal fitness* and worth, but *barely* from divine *appointment*. But if so, the blood of bulls and goats *might* have taken away sins, which the scripture declares was *not possible*; for that a better sacrifice was needed to purify heavenly things. But one could not be *more suitable* or *better* than another, if all were alike *fit* and *good*. According to the divine word, it appears, that in point of preciousness, excellence, and worth, Christ is superior to all other bestowments of God. The gift of his *Son* is always represented there as by far the greatest instance of his love to men. Agreeable to this idea of Christ's superlative excellency, is the apostle's inference, Rom. viii. 32, "He that spared not *his own Son*, but delivered *him* up for us all, how shall he not with *him* also freely give us all things?" But if Christ be no more than a creature, this conclusion loses all

its force. For creature worth, and even creature conception, is far beneath what God confers on those that love him. But, dear brethren, the value and efficacy of our Lord's sufferings is proportionate to the excellency of his person. By the death of the Son of God, the eternal salvation of his people is secured, and the nature of the great Jehovah illustriously displayed. The sufferings and death of our divine Redeemer show, that it is indeed a "fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" and that sin and suffering are inseparably connected. Herein has God given a greater proof of the holiness of his nature, his love to equity, order, and good government, and his infinite abhorrence of sin, than in all the judgments executed on transgressors in this world, or that to come. What are all the sorrows on earth, or sighs in hell, when compared with the agonies and groans of our adorable Immanuel!

His ability to bear the curse due to our sins, and feel the displeasure of offended Deity, without sustaining the loss of perpetual happiness, further illustrates and proves his superiority to all created existences. The curse of the Almighty, executed on the most exalted creature, who excels in strength, would necessarily destroy or annihilate their felicity. The awful gloom, which is the natural effect of a total separation from the origin of bliss, would for ever exclude every ray of hope, and fill the mind with doleful misery: because the *finite* capacity of a mere creature bears no proportion to *infinite* displeasure; the whole of which could not be endured in any given period: therefore the spirit would fail before him, and the soul that

he hath made be overwhelmed, and sink for ever, as in a bottomless pit, under the load of guilt and tremendous horror. Hence the awful misery of them that perish is described by language the most terrific, as "everlasting burning, the vengeance of eternal fire, wrath to come, fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries," &c.

Dear brethren, how ought our hearts to glow with gratitude to, and for, such a Saviour, who was able clearly to discern the nature and number of his people's sins imputed to him, and their awful consequences coming upon him, without despair, and could bear the wrath of God without distraction. For though he died a victim to divine justice, which we had offended, having made reconciliation, removed the curse, and procured the blessing for us; having vindicated divine authority, and subdued every enemy, he then ascended triumphantly to heaven, where he appears and acts for his chosen, in every capacity adapted to their wants, and expressive of his love. There he reigns with infinite authority, and shines with unrivalled splendour—beheld, admired, and adored by holy spirits of every rank and order. These surround his glorious throne, singing with rapturous ardour, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Before him are poured forth the prayers of the saints, as from golden vials full of odours, while those who were redeemed from among men, recollecting what they were, and whence they came, have a song peculiar to themselves, which angels cannot sing, in which they say, "Thou art worthy—for thou

wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," &c. Rev. v. 9, to the end.

ORIGIN

OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH,

NOW MEETING IN

Little Wild-street, London.

(Compiled from the Records of that Congregation.)

THE Baptists in England trace their origin, as a separate *denomination*, to the period of the Reformation in the reign of Henry VIII.; though there is good evidence that persons of the same sentiments, on the subject of believers' baptism, were found among the Wickliffites and Lollards, who were the Protestant dissenters from the church of Rome before that period; and also, that all the British Christians, till the arrival of Austin at the close of the sixth century, were ignorant of the practice of infant baptism.

The first churches of which there is any account, were composed of those who have been since called *general* Baptists; because they believed in general redemption. A society of this description existed in London as early as 1611. The first church of *particular* Baptists in London, so called from their holding the doctrine of personal election and particular redemption, was not formed till 1633. Between these churches there does not appear to have been any communion, as they met in distinct *Associations* during all the period prior to the Revolution in 1688, and just after that time in separate *General Assemblies*.

The chief place of worship among the general Baptists appears to have been at White's-alley, Moor-fields; but the church meeting there, was part of a large church composed of five churches; *viz.* White's-alley; Glass-house-yard, Goswell-street; Rupert-street, Goodman's-fields; at the Dork-head, Shad-Thames; and Duke-street, in the Park, Southwark. All of these, as they express it, "professing and practising the six principles of the Christian religion, mentioned Heb. vi. 1, 2." In November, 1691, these churches agreed to receive into their communion, as a sixth part, the church whose history is now presented to the reader; the origin of which is thus circumstantially related:

"Proposals for the settling of a Baptist Meeting in the Westerne parts of the Suburbs of London.

"GOD haveing, by his over-ruleing Providence, opened such a doore for the preaching of the gospell, as has not been knowne in the ages past; itt is become the duty of the professors thereof to use their endeavors to promote itt in all places to the vttmost; wherein there hath not beene that care taken as there ought, which is manifest, (among other instances) in that there is not, nor has been, anny place sett up for the worshipp of God in all the out parishes, or places westward from London; insomuch, that many professors dwelling in those parts, by reason of their age & infirmities, and remotenesse from the congregations wherevnto they belong, have either neglected their duties, or betaken themselves to the assemblies and places of those who differ from vs in the trueths of the gospell;

to the great dishonour of the same.

"That, therefore, trueth may bee advanced, and that those who have gone astray may returne to their duty, a convenient place is now to bee had for the worshipp of God in those parts, (*viz.*) att the Two Golden Balls, the vpper end of Bow-streete, by Hart-streete, in Covent-garden. And for the carrying on of the same itt is proposed as followeth:—

"1. That our brethren in the Lord, Jonathan Jennings, [Thomas] Kirby, John Turner, & John Piggott, bee desired in their turnes to vndertake the worke of the ministry there.

"2. That those whome the sence of their duty, and love to the interest of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall move them therevnto, doo subscribe their names herevnto; together with what they thincke fitt to contribute *yearely* to the defraying the charge of the rent, and the ministry there."

[Ninety-seven names are inserted, subscribing £22, and engaging to pay £64 18s. annually.]

"Att a meeteing of the elders and representatives of the five severall congregations, mett att White's-alley, November 5th, 1691.

"Whereas, a proposition was made for the setting upp a meeting for the preaching of the gospel in the westerne parts of the suburbs of London, and a convenient place being found out and taken for that purpose (*viz.*) att the 2: golden balls the vpper end of Bow-streete, by Hart-streete, near Covent Garden, the elders and brethren have approved of the proposition, and agreed as followeth:

"1. That it be recomended to the care of brother John Turner to supply and provide preachers to carry on the work there.

"2. That such of the members of the severall parts as are judged capeable by the churches to serve theme, may have the liberty, as often as they can be prevayled with, to assist brother Turner there: they not neglecting their owne congregations.

"3. That such as shall attend the heareing of the word there, being members of the severall parts, shall continue their communion with, and bee vnder the care of the severall congregations to which they at present belong.

"4. That such as God shall please to bring over to the faith there shall sitt downe with such of the 5: parts as they shall make choice of, vntill a church state be settled there.

"5. That this shall continue for so long time as the 5: parts shall think fitt, and till they shall make an alteration." [Signed] "John Eamory, messenger; Jonathan Jennings; John Malden; Thomas Kirby, elders." and 14 others.

The first meeting held is thus mentioned: "According to the afore recited Act of the 5: churches, the meeting beganne in Bow-street, Covent Garden, the 15th of November, 1691." It was then agreed, among other things, "that fifty shillings should be advanced for brother Turner's present occasions." At a meeteing the 20th of January, 1691 $\frac{1}{2}$, it was agreed, that an application should be made to the church in White's-alley, "that brother Jennings should break bread with us at Covent Garden;"—that the "several members who had subscribed to the carrying on of the work should be consulted with,

touching our being constituted in a church state here; and that the 30th of January be sett apart for prayer and humiliation, to implore the blessing and direction of the Lord in carrying on our work here.

“On the 22d of March, 169¹/₂, the brethren being then mett to consider how a church state might bee settled here, agreed that the following request be sent to the 5: churches, (*viz.*) ‘Wee who are members of the church of Christ, consisting of 5: parts, owning the principles mentioned Heb. vi. 2: now by your consignmt. meeting att Covent Garden, do humbly desire our brethren meeting att Goswell-street part, to meete the rest of the parts on Tuesday, April the 12th, 1692, att 3: of the clock in the afternoon, at brother Jennings’s meeting-place in Moorfields, to consult of methods and ways for the support of the afore-said meeting: our brother Turner being deceased. Signed, Robert Chandler, John Hicks, William Dent.’”

The proposed meeting was accordingly held; when it was resolved, that “the meeting lately sett upp in Hart-street should be continued;” and that “they be sett down and declared to bee a congregation, and a 6th part in our dependancy.” Signed, Jo. Jennings, Thomas Kirby, and 16 others.

Then follow the “Articles of Union of the $\frac{5}{6}$ churches.—Wee the elders, deacons, and brethren, being representatives of the five parts of the congregation now holding our assembly at White’s-alley, in Moorfields; at Glass-house-yard; att Rupert-streete, in Goodman’s-fields; att the Dork head, att Shadd Thames; and at Duke-streete, in the Parke,

Southwark; all of us professing and practising the 6 principles of the Christian religion mentioned Heb. 6. c.: 1, 2: taking into our serious consideration by what means wee may best promote the glory of God, the gospell of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the mutuall edification one of another, have, with one consent, agreed unto these severall things following:—

“1. That such of the parts have power of themselves to receive in members to their communion, and hold assemblies and church meetings to deale with offenders, and to regulate their own affairs; only when the case may be respecting their officers, or any other matter which they shall esteeme difficult; in such cases it is agreed that the mutual assistance of all the parts be required.

“2. It is agreed, that the several elders shall apply their particular service vnto that part to which they appertayne: yett for the better maintayning of our union, itt is agreed, the elders be desired to make frequent changes att the several parts, both with respect to the work of preaching, and breaking of bread.

“3. It is agreed, that when there may bee want of an elder in any part, the rest of the elders of the other parts shall mutually assist such parts in all the services of religion vntil they bee supplied with an elder or elders.

“4. It is agreed, that with respect to the choice of officers to serve the congregation, any of the five parts shall have power to nominate any person or persons which are in any of the parts to the office of elders or deacons. But yett that their election shall bee by calling all the parts together; and that the

choice be by the general consent of the whole.

"5. It is agreed, that with respect to the elder or elders which shall bee chosen by the whole, they shall be disposed of by the whole to serve in that particular part which hath most need; yett so as there be the consent of the elder or elders so chosen to accept of the care of that part, and the approbation and good likeing of that part vnto which hee or they may be assigned.

"6. It is agreed, that with respect to the deacons that shall bee chosen by the whole, that they bee to continue in the part or parts vnto which they did before belong; vnlesse some extraordinary necessity shall require their removal: and in such case it bee by the generall consent of the five parts, and the consent of the deacons so to be removed.

"7. It is agreed, for the preservation of a cordiall vnion amongst us, that all the five parts shall once every yeare meete together att one place to celebrate the remembrance of our Lord's death in the supper; only whereas many of our brethren which belong to Goodman's-fields meeting differ from many other parts in the manner of the Lord's-supper,* it is agreed, that they may have their liberty to absent from this general meeting if they please.

"Signed by us, the representatives of the five parts, March the 18th, 1692, Jos. Jennings, and 25 others."

It appears that the articles above-mentioned had been agreed upon before the commencement of the church in Hart-street, but was now agreed to by them, as a sixth-part, as follows:

"Whereas the elders and representatives of the above mentioned five parts have, this 12th day of Aprill, 1692, agreed to settle a congregation as a sixth part in Hart-street, Covent Garden, consisting of several of the members of the said sixth part, whose names are herevnto subscribed: do hereby oblige them and ourselves to continue under, and to be governed according to the several articles above written; and to be of the same dependancy as a sixth part.—Phillip Price, Robert Chandler, Wm. Dent, Abr. Astley, John Hicks."

At a church meeting, April 26, 1692, they appointed two members as their representatives at the General Assembly; and also chose three brethren "to officiate as deacons at the Lord's-table, if the rest of the parts do not accomodate us with some of their *ordained* deacons."

It has been mentioned, that Mr. John Piggott, a member of the church in Rupert-street, Goodman's-fields, was one of the ministers appointed to preach in Hart-street. Every circumstance respecting this minister, who afterwards attained to such eminence, and raised the church to a high degree of reputation, will be interesting to the reader.

On the 28th of June, 1692, about six months afterwards, the church agreed, in order to carry on the work of the ministry, to allow Mr. Piggott twenty pounds a year, and to Mr. Mark Keys fifteen pounds a year. Mr. Piggott was to preach in the afternoon, "and also on fast days, and other days that shall be appointed for the public worship of God, and that brother Keys assist him therein; and that our brother Piggott do also undertake the worke of baptizing, and

* It does not appear wherein this difference of opinion consisted.

visiting and attending at our church meetings and other ministerial affairs as there shall be occasion." On the 23d of August following, three brethren were appointed "to meet brother Piggott in Belle Sauvageyard on Ludgate-hill, in order to license himself and place at the next sessions, or the next quarter sessions." On the 25th of October, 1692, it was resolved to introduce singing into the public worship as follows: "Forasmuch as diverse have been dissatisfied that wee are not in the exercise and practice of singing of psalms and hymns in our publick worshipping and service; it is agreed for the satisfaction of such, that our brethren concerned in the worke of the ministry here bee at liberty to sing a psalm or hymne after the worke of prayer and preaching on the evening of the Lord's days, and after the preaching on the days of thanksgiving."

The introduction of this practice, however, and by omitting to *lay hands* upon the members when they were received into the church (which was said to be a violation of the *fourth* principle, viz. "of laying on of hands." Heb. vi. 2. The singing of *psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs*, were, though performed at the end of the service,) to give the objectors opportunity to leave the place without wounding their consciences) was considered such an innovation; and not laying on of hands such a departure from the faith by the other five parts of "the dependancy," that discontents took place, which this Baptist PRESBYTERY in GENERAL ASSEMBLY could not settle, and the consequence was, that the church in Hart-street determined to withdraw from them; assigning among other reasons, that the

five parts had violated the second principle, viz. Heb. vi. 2, "of faith towards God." Say they, "For that the Dependancy, as is manifest, holds communion with those that are not sound in the second principle; but are tainted with the leaven, or heresy, known by the name of Socinianism, to the great reproach of our profession."

This doctrine had been recently introduced among the General Baptists, by Mr. Matthew Caffin, of Horsham; and in the course of the succeeding century ruined the churches, and destroyed the glory of that denomination; so that *the gold became dim; and the most fine gold was changed.*

IOTA.

(To be concluded in our next.)

ON THE DUTY

OF

SELF-EXAMINATION.

IF we would be happy in the enjoyment of the divine presence, and feel the consolation of a lively faith in Jesus Christ, we must frequently, diligently, and impartially examine ourselves as to the state of religion in our souls.

The man who by self-examination is enabled to prove that divine grace has wrought an effectual change in him, will therein have matter of solid satisfaction and delight; reflecting upon what God has graciously done for him, he will feel a deep sense of his obligations, and ardently desire to promote his glory. He will not be carried forward in his profession of Christianity by the good opinion or the applause of others, but will have an inward

evidence that he is the subject of divine influence. The Spirit of God will bear witness with his spirit that he is a child of God by faith in Christ.

"They who, in a crazy vessel, navigate a sea wherein are shoals and currents innumerable, if they would keep their course clear, or reach their port in safety, must carefully repair the smallest injuries, throw out the line, and take their observation. In the voyage of life, also, the Christian who would not make shipwreck of his faith while he is habitually watchful and provident, must make it his express business to look into his state, and ascertain his progress." *Wilberforce's Pract. View.* In this world Christians are continually exposed to temptations from the enemy, to oppositions from carnal men, and to the yet more powerful evils of their own hearts; therefore, if they would proceed with safety and comfort in their way, they must be watchful and diligent. If while surrounded with so many dangers, they become careless and indifferent as to the life of religion in their souls, they will easily become the prey of their foes. We may be off our guard, but the enemy is always vigilant, and may surprise us by an unexpected and powerful attack, when we are least able to make resistance; thus he has gained advantage over many, and in a few moments hurried them to a painful distance from God.

Self-examination is the more important, as sin is of so deceitful a nature, that those who think themselves least under its influence are frequently the fastest bound by its chains. Great circumspection and diligence are absolutely necessary, if we would glorify God and live in a sense

of his favour, while a careless attendance to the duties of religion will lead to a secret apostacy from him, and be attended with perplexing and distressing fears. Let us, then, examine ourselves by the rules of scripture, that we be not deceived in the estimation of our own characters.

This is a duty to which our carnal hearts are greatly averse; with difficulty we bring ourselves to engage in it, yet, if it be neglected, we shall make but little progress in holiness. In the hurry of our worldly affairs, the state and temper of our hearts may be much overlooked; and, being naturally disposed to think favourably of ourselves, we may easily be persuaded to imagine that we are better, with respect to spiritual things, than is really the case. We should, therefore, bring our whole conduct to the touchstone of divine truth, that we may be well acquainted with ourselves, and obtain an assurance that will not shrink from investigation. Many of those evils, by which God has been dishonoured, and his truth brought into disrepute, would have been prevented, had not self-examination been neglected.

If we have lived many years in the profession of godliness, we must have been surprised at hearing that some have forsaken the ways of the Lord, of whose religion we, perhaps, had no doubt; we must, also, have been shocked at the falls of others, who once appeared as pillars in his cause. They *secretly* forsook the Lord, and their strength and defence departed from them—they made a few ineffectual struggles against the force of their depraved passions, but the enemy blinded them to the exceeding sinfulness of sin, entangled them in his

shares, and they fell to their disgrace and wounding; proving, by woful experience, that it is an evil thing and bitter to sin against God. Many dark days have passed over them, anxious fears have distressed them, and in bitterness have they prayed "Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice." Sin is as destructive to our comfort as it is contrary to our duty; it is that abominable thing which God's righteous soul hates; and if we are not watchful against its influence upon our minds, we must expect and esteem it a mercy to be convinced of the evil of such indifference in ways corresponding to his holiness and justice. "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes." What a consolation it is, that it is added by the same infallible Spirit—"Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." Had it not been thus, our sins would have caused an everlasting separation between God and our souls. Yet such is the nature of true religion, that these promises cannot be enjoyed while the soul is at a distance from God.

Self-examination is a duty enforced upon us by great and powerful arguments. The word of God expressly enjoins it. "Let every man prove his own work.—Examine yourselves." We should not only endeavour to know the spiritual condition of our souls, but, like David, devoutly pray, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any

wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Every Christian should desire to have his real state ascertained, and the springs of his conduct laid open to his view; that he may know how far he is influenced by the principles of true piety. If we can prove that we love God because he is holy, and seek his glory as the first and great business of our lives—that we feel the warm emotions of gratitude for his goodness towards us, and find pleasure in his ways, we have evidence that divine grace has sanctified our hearts, and we may rejoice in him as our portion; and this will support us under the difficulties and trials he wisely appoints us in this world; his promises will revive our drooping minds, and the prospect of everlasting felicity will cheer our fainting spirits. But if we omit to examine our evidences of these things, we shall have no comfortable or satisfactory knowledge of our state; and although we may possess the principles of religion, we shall resemble tradesmen, who, for want of examining their books, know not how their affairs stand.

To retire from the noise of the world, and commune with our own hearts and God, to review his dealings with us in past years, and to consider our rebellion and ingratitude towards him, in connection with his distinguishing patience and forbearance towards us, must fill our minds with penitence, and cover our faces with shame and confusion; must cause us to hate those sins by which we have offended him, and inspire us with strong desires to be entirely conformed to his will. To consider in this retirement the great deliverances he has wrought for us, and the dangers from which he

has preserved us through the journey of life, must animate us with delightful feelings, and cause us to raise our Ebenezers to the praise of his glory—at such times heaven is already begun in our souls. We lose much for want of more frequent communion with God, and are often sorrowful when we might rejoice, did we maintain a closer walk and more constant fellowship with him.

We shall feel the necessity of examining ourselves, when we consider that many have gone far in an outward profession of Christianity, while their hearts have not been renewed by divine grace. Judas, upon whose name an indelible mark of infamy is fixed, had so conducted himself amongst the disciples, that when their master said—“Verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me,” it does not appear that any of them fixed their thoughts upon him as the traitor. An awful proof that the form of religion may be tolerably well supported by those who are destitute of its vital influence. The Laodiceans imagined themselves to be “rich and increased with goods, and to have need of nothing,” when in reality they were wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. O how sin blinds the eyes of men and hardens the heart, stupifies the powers of the soul, and produces the greatest infatuation. How solemn is the thought of professing the gospel with reputation among men, even amongst Christians, and, at last, to have no part in the Saviour! To see others with whom we have been familiar, in whose company we have gone to the house of God, taken into the kingdom of heaven, and we ourselves thrust out! Come, my soul, examine thy state, and

know what it is before God. A few more rolling suns, and thou must appear before the judgment-seat of Jesus Christ: the heights of bliss, or the depths of woe must soon be thy everlasting portion. “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.” The motives by which we are governed, the ends we have in view, and the means we use to accomplish those ends, should all be brought to the law and to the testimony. Were we more frequently and seriously to examine ourselves, many of our departures from God would be prevented, we should preserve a greater consistency of character, and more evidently evince the reality of religion to all about us.

We mark the extreme folly of those who forsake the fountain of living waters in pursuit of things which, if obtained, may pierce their souls with many sorrows, and yet we too much resemble them. We know that God is the sum of all excellence, the source of all felicity; that our highest happiness springs from his favour; yet we suffer the trifles of time to divide between him and our souls. Extreme folly and madness! Where would our foolish hearts wander? or upon what would our roving affections fix? “Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord: let us lift up our hearts, with our hands, to God in the heavens.” May we hear the warning voice, “Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.”

It is highly needful to guard against self-confidence. Peter said, “Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will

I never be offended. Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." But how weak are human resolutions! How frail and feeble is man! In the hour of trial, even the zealous and warm-hearted Peter "began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man." "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not," will be the earnest—the constant prayer of those who are truly humble.

Dereham.

G.

ROUSSEAU'S COMPARISON

BETWEEN THE DEATH OF

SOCRATES AND JESUS.

"Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, *Truly this was the Son of God.*" MATT. xxvii. 54.

It is not a little remarkable, that the contemplation of the very same scene which so forcibly struck the Roman centurion, has extorted a similar confession from one of the most eloquent of modern sceptics, who has never been accused of too much credulity; and who, though he could bring himself to resist the evidence both of prophecy and of miracles, and was, therefore, certainly no bigot to Christianity, yet was overwhelmed with the evidence arising from the character, the sufferings, and the death of Jesus. I allude to the celebrated comparison between the

death of Socrates and the death of Jesus, drawn by the masterly pen of Rousseau. It affords a striking resemblance to this confession of the centurion, and affords a forcible and unprejudiced testimony to the divinity of Christ.

"Where (says he) is the man, where is the philosopher, who can act, suffer, and die, without weakness, and without ostentation? When Plato describes his imaginary just man, covered with all the opprobrium of guilt, yet at the same time meeting the sublimest rewards of virtue, he paints precisely every feature in the character of Jesus Christ. The resemblance is so striking, that all the fathers have observed it, and it is impossible to be deceived in it. What prejudice, what blindness must possess the mind of that man who *dares* to compare the son of Sophroniscus with the son of Mary! What a distance is there between the one and the other! The death of Socrates, philosophizing calmly with his friends, is the most gentle that can be wished; that of Jesus, expiring in torments, insulted, derided, and reviled by all the people, the most horrible that can be imagined. Socrates, taking the poisonous cup, blesses the man who presents it to him, and who, in the very act of presenting it, melts into tears. Jesus, in the midst of the most agonizing tortures, prays for his enraged persecutors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a GOD."

DR. PORTEUS'S LECTURES.

Juvenile Department.

HISTORICAL ESSAYS.

No. VI.

On the Corruption of Christianity in Britain, during the reign of Henry the First.

DESIROUS of presenting our youthful readers a more connected view of the operations of popish superstition in the ages of its glory than our history at large affords, we propose to remark its progress in this country through successive reigns, till the glorious era of the Reformation: that they may feel increasingly grateful for emancipation from its ruthless tyranny, and use every lawful and honourable exertion for the prevention of its returning influence. It has been urged by some, whose philanthropy exceeds their observation, and by others, to whom all systems of religion are alike indifferent, that Popery is not now what it once was; and, that if it were, such is the general diffusion of knowledge, that it would be impossible for any species of superstition again to gain so complete an ascendancy over the human mind. In reply to which, it need only be remarked, banish the Bible, that source of truth, from society, and the return to the grossest superstition, till the heart of man is less depraved, would be unavoidable; which is precisely the desire of the reigning pontiff.

The haughty Anselm, who gave so much inquietude to William Rufus, we left on the continent, whither he had retired, lest he should feel the resentment of his sovereign, whom he had repeatedly provoked. The usurpation of the throne by Henry, A. D. 1100, in the absence of his brother Robert, could not fail to prove favourable to the banished prelate, and the Catholic cause; for he who had been guilty of so bold an encroachment as to seize a crown,

could not, with a good grace, nor without danger, resist the invasions of a power, which as they were made under the specious character of public benefits, resulting from apostolical solicitude, were generally popular; especially as the exertion of this power was absolutely necessary to the success of the enterprize. But for this wily policy, the utmost stretch of papal authority would doubtless have been exerted in preservation of the rights of Robert, for even gratitude demanded it; who, after exemplary sacrifices, had been exerting himself to the utmost in what was deemed a common cause, the crusades, and in which he had obtained a most distinguished reputation. Henry, aware of this, lost no time in sending messengers to court Anselm's return; knowing, that on Robert's arrival from the holy land, should he not have secured the good-will of the clergy, his reign would be precarious at best. Anselm returned, and Henry proposed that he should repeat the homage done to the late king, but the prelate, anxious to avail himself of this critical opportunity, objected to do what no English bishop had ever before ventured to refuse; and that he might gain the full benefit of the prince's delicate situation, he even resolved to have no communication with any ecclesiastic who should so prostitute his spiritual dignity. He further objected to the decisions of the Council of Bari, mentioned in our last, although he had contributed to form them. All that Henry could do, was to propose a suspension of the controversy, while he sent messengers to Rome to effect an accommodation.

Robert soon returned, and having taken possession of Normandy, hastened, and not uninvited, with his troops to Portsmouth, where he landed. Henry redoubled his attentions to the clergy, and to Anselm in particular, and by the most courteous

behaviour, and unbounded promises, insured his support. The prelate assured the barons, who were a formidable class of men, of the king's determination to avoid the excesses of former reigns, and predicted happiness from so prudent an administration; and, as a battle was contemplated between the assembled forces, he rode through Henry's ranks, reminding them of their oaths of allegiance, and exhorting them to valour. An agreement between the two brothers happily prevented hostilities.

In the mean time, the messenger returned from Rome, with an absolute refusal of the king's requirements, accompanied with the following reasons of the pope, Pascal II. which could hardly fail to convince the public mind: That Christ was the door of the church, the pope was allowed to be the representative of Christ, and, consequently, admittance to the sacred office, and preferment in it, could only be through him; that priests were called gods in the scriptures, and it was monstrous that a man should pretend to create his God.

The king, a prudent man, hoped still to gain by delay what he feared to attempt by force: he accordingly sent three bishops to Rome, and Anselm, that he might be represented, had the temerity to send two messengers. The pope returned replies both to the prelate and the sovereign of the most decided kind. Henry evaded their force, by suppressing the letter addressed to him, and inducing the three bishops to declare on their episcopal faith, that the pontiff had privately assured them of his favourable designs to the king, although he refrained from formally resigning his prerogative. In vain did Anselm's messengers testify against this representation, for their report was not calculated of equal worth with that of three bishops. The high spirited Anselm resented this stratagem, by refusing any intercourse with the perjured prelates; and so formidable was his displeasure, that they were obliged to resign their mitres. Affairs becoming increasingly serious, the offending prelate repeated the precau-

tion of making a journey to Rome. Considering the notoriety of these quarrels, the dominion this corrupt system gave to the clergy over the minds of their converts, such as no honest man would wish to possess, is exemplified by the conduct of the people at this prelate's departure, thousands of whom, not merely ecclesiasties, accompanied him to the shore, to witness and regret his departure, who, says a celebrated historian, "scrupled not in this manner to declare for their primate against their sovereign."

Henry sent another messenger to Pascal, who assumed a more decisive tone, declaring that his master would rather lose his crown than give up the right of granting investitures: he was answered in a style as firm and as false—"and I," said the pope, "would rather lose my head than allow him to retain it." We say as false, for the king loved his crown too well, and the pope had formally resigned that very right to the emperor Henry V. who exasperated at his tyranny, had seized his person. To render the agreement more valid, the emperor and Pascal had communicated together on the same hosts; but the latter had no sooner regained his liberty, than he revoked all he had done, and acted as sovereignly. Pascal and Henry I. being men of such resolution and prudence, found it to each others interest to terminate their differences by severally acceding a little, the pope was therefore to grant the investiture,* and the king to receive the homage.

About A. D. 1107, the persevering clergy held a synod at Westminster, and succeeded in extending their influence. The celibacy of the priests, and the prohibition of long hair were confirmed; and laymen were forbidden to marry within the

* Bishops were elected by the chapter, but before they entered upon the office, they received a ring and a crosier from the king, which was called their *investiture*, and then did *homage* as subjects, which ceremony was before explained. While the king could refuse to give the former and receive the latter, he retained the power of filling the sees.

seventh degree of affinity, and thus dispensations and divorces being multiplied, the revenues of the pontiff were basely augmented, for the art of writing being far from common, registers were very indifferently kept, and it was not always easy to ascertain that which this law required.

Though the influence of the holy see was evidently increasing, yet it always depended, in some degree, on the disposition and character of the reigning prince; and had not the circumstances of Henry obliged him to be very obsequious to the clergy, it is probable they would have made less progress in their encroachments during his reign; but such was the craft of Rome, that it took care to seem to exercise its assumed prerogative in the midst of the most determined opposition: thus, when Henry, who greatly disapproved the mission of a legate into his dominions, seized the opportunity of regaining somewhat of the liberty of the English church, by ridding himself of such a visitor, which the licentious conduct of the

Cardinal de Crema afforded him, whose immorality was detected at a time when he publicly forbade the marriage of the clergy, and which occasioned the breaking up of a synod that was met for the extension of their privileges, the pope conferred that dignity on the archbishop of Canterbury, renewing the commission from time to time, not forgetting to publish, that the primate derived his authority from Rome, nor could Henry escape the force of such ingenuity.

Such is the picture of human nature under such circumstances, left to the operations of its own passions, and led captive by the devil at his will. We thank thee, O thou great Disposer of events, that we were not among the blindest devotees of such an age, but that we are permitted to live in this period of light and liberty. Vouchsafe to us the influences of thy Holy Spirit, that we may be found among those, who, through the merits of Jesus Christ, enjoy its greatest privileges.

H. S. A.

Obituary.

MISS HARVEY.

MISS SARAH MARY HARVEY was the third daughter of Mr. Thomas Harvey, of Woodnesborough Parsonage, near Sandwich, Kent, a deacon of the Baptist church at Eythorne, of which church the deceased was a member. She was born December 21, 1789, received a moderately good education, was amiable and engaging in her manners, strictly moral in her conduct, regularly attended the means of grace, and always had a pious example in her parents and family:—but, alas! her heart was unrenewed. It pleased the Lord to call her by his grace in early life, and then all

her excellencies were consecrated to God. On a profession of her faith she was baptized, and joined the Baptist church at Eythorne; but soon afterwards was attacked by a severe lingering affliction, which so much reduced her strength, that she was laid aside from all active usefulness; her disorder baffled the skill of several physicians, was protracted to a period of more than eight years, and from which she never recovered. During this long season of debility and suffering, she happily experienced divine consolation and support, and remarkably exemplified the power and influence of divine grace in her continued patience and holy resignation; never uttering a murmuring sentence, but

often expressing acquiescence in the will of her heavenly Father. A letter which she wrote to her pastor during her illness, and from which the following extracts are made, will best describe the state of her mind on a review of her conversion, profession, experience, and feelings under her long continued weakness and pain. In this letter she says,

“When I come to take a retrospective view of my past life, well may I say ‘preserved in Christ Jesus and called.’ I trust the Lord began to bless me in very early life. At not more than nine years of age I had many cutting convictions on account of sin; and, likewise, many severe temptations. About that time I read Janeway’s Token for Children, and in secret did weep bitterly before the Lord, entreating that he would forgive my sin, that I might die happily like those good children. My temptations were very severe; Satan and my own wicked heart told me, it was too soon for me to think about religion. My impressions in some measure wore off, till the year 1800, when at Eythorne school the Lord was pleased, in his infinite goodness, to send a second admonition to me. One Lord’s-day afternoon, when the members of the Baptist church at Eythorne were about to partake of the ordinance of the Lord’s-supper, I saw my sister Mary and brother Thomas uniting in that inestimable privilege; my heart sunk within me, and I burst into a flood of tears, and thought, What, if I should be shut out of heaven! My heart was so full of grief that when my dear sister Mary wished to know the cause of my excessive weeping, I could only say, I want to go to heaven. She wept also, and pointed out to me the way of salvation. I went weeping to school, for such was the perturbation of my mind that I could not refrain. My governess thought it was at my leaving my parents, which had previously been the cause; but my concern at that time was of a very different kind: my soul was overwhelmed under a sense of my manifold transgressions. I was then indeed thirsting for the pardon of my sins, and to be washed

in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Many times I was very much persecuted, because I could not do as those around me did. I never could pray while the young ladies were in the room with me, they would laugh at me, and call me a Methodist; yet I could not live without prayer. I was obliged to take the opportunity in secret, and pour forth my soul in prayer to the Lord, while they were employed in their amusements. But alas! this frame of mind did not continue long: for what with my own corruptions, and the prevalence of Satan’s temptations, my heart began to grow cold, and prayer became a task instead of a privilege; and I shunned the friends I loved, because they should not speak to me. Thus I went on till I was quite cold to my own best interest, Galio like, caring for none of these things; yet I could not give over praying, though it was attended in a lifeless unprofitable manner. This state of mind continued till the year 1808, when the Lord was pleased, I trust, to work effectually on my poor rebellious heart. It is a great mercy I was not cut down as a cumberer of the ground. The blessed Lord manifested infinite love in bringing me out of that horrible pit, and directing me to the Lord Jesus Christ. I may well exclaim,

‘Why was I made to hear his voice,
And enter while there’s room?’ &c.

“One morning, I well remember, when at the throne of grace, my heart was so overwhelmed with a sense of my own unworthiness, and manifold transgressions, that I could scarcely lift my eyes to heaven, when rising almost in despair, the Lord was pleased, in his infinite goodness, to bring to my mind Matt. v. 12, ‘Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.’ This made my heart glow with love to the Saviour; I thought I could do or suffer any thing for him, and the enjoyment of more of his love shed abroad in my heart. At this time I considered it my duty to declare what the Lord had done for my soul, and to make a public profession of his name.

This I did February 26, 1809; was baptized by immersion, and joined the church of Christ under the pastoral care of the Rev. John Giles, at Eythorne, with a sincere desire and prayer that I might, through divine grace, prove a useful and honourable member of the church militant. But truly may we say, 'the Lord's ways are not as our ways, neither his thoughts as our thoughts.'

'God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.'

"Little, very little, did I think, when I first set out in the good ways of God, that I was to drink the bitter, though I trust salutary, ingredients of the cup of affliction. I have been called long to stand on the stormy banks of Jordan. But, blessed be his name, the Lord knows what is best for us. He sees fit to afflict, and when he hath tried me, I trust he will bring me forth to glorify him here, or to join the redeemed above. He hath said he will bring his children through the fire—will refine them as silver, and try them as gold. It is my daily prayer, that whether I live I may live unto the Lord; or whether I die, I may die to the Lord. I have been called to conflict with sin and Satan in my affliction, but the Lord hath hitherto been my refuge and support. He hath promised daily strength, and hath fulfilled this promise to me. While probationers here, we must expect times of trial, but the Lord will deliver those that call upon him, and they shall glorify him. Were it not for the hope I have in the merits of my dear Intercessor and Saviour, I should be of all the most miserable. But God has given many great and precious promises, these are my comfort and support in my affliction: were it not for the words upon which he hath caused me to hope, my soul would often be overwhelmed within me. The 103d Psalm frequently relieves and revives my fainting spirits. I can say, notwithstanding all my sufferings, Good is the will of the Lord concerning me. In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts, O Lord, delight my soul."

This letter was written some con-

siderable time before her death, and contains a minute detail of her joys and sorrows—her conflicts and comforts. She continued to experience similar frames of mind till she died, June 27, 1817, in the twenty-seventh year of her age. She was interred in the Baptist burying-ground at Eythorne, July 2; and on the following Lord's-day her funeral-sermon was preached to a numerous and attentive congregation, by her pastor, from 2 Samuel, xxii. 17, "He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters:" words chosen by herself, and very appropriate to her case. Her death was also improved on the Lord's-day evening following, at Mr. Lemon's new meeting-house at Woodnesborough, near her father's house, by the Rev. Mr. Clarabut, of New Mill, Herts, from Proverbs, xiv. 32, "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death."

Eythorne, Sept. 1817.

J. G.

REV. MR. MORRIS.

DIED, July 28, 1817, the Rev. Richard Morris, aged seventy years; having been forty-two years a minister of the gospel at Amersham, Bucks.

He settled there in 1775, and on the 4th of June, 1776, was ordained as pastor of the Baptist church at Woodrow, two miles from Amersham.

In 1783, a church was formed at Amersham, partly of members from Woodrow, and the rest from the Independent church at Chesham, (then under the care of Mr. Spooner). Mr. Morris became their pastor, and continued over them till his death, a space of thirty-four years. A meeting-house was fitted up in 1777: a new one was built in 1784; it was enlarged in 1797, and again in 1799.

The present building will seat about 700 people, and about 300 members have been added to the church since its formation.

Mr. Morris died greatly beloved and lamented by his church and congregation; he was highly respect-

ed by the inhabitants of the town, and by those who knew him, of various denominations. He was interred in a vault, in the burying-ground adjoining the meeting-house; a funeral-sermon was preached by Mr. Sexton, from 1 John, iii. 21,

and three following verses. Mr. Godwin delivered an oration at the grave, to a crowded and respectable auditory.

Some further account of Mr. Morris may be expected to be presented to the public.

Review.

A Plea for Infant Baptism, &c. By Thomas Belsham, Minister of Essex-street Chapel. 8vo. pp. 121.

(Continued from page 384.)

ANOTHER article is that which relates to

The Christian Scriptures.

The peculiarities of the Unitarian creed are but sparingly introduced in this pamphlet; but let the young reader tread cautiously—there are several snakes in the grass. Mr. Belsham maintains, with respect to baptism, “that the New Testament is not the only source of authentic information.” p. 52. In the same page he complains, that “most Protestant writers argue as if all the books of the New Testament were inspired writings, collected together by inspired men, comprehending a complete code of Christian doctrine and practice. Whereas the fact is, that they were casually selected, we know not by whom, from other works of perhaps equal authority, which were in circulation.” That Mr. Belsham has written so much like an infidel might, perhaps, be naturally expected, for he has long since passed the half-way house on the high road to infidelity; but that he has written so little like a scholar possessed of accurate information, is truly astonishing. Let us examine this statement.

1. They were selected “from other works of perhaps equal authority which were in circulation.” What these other works were, we are left to imagine.

2. They were “casually selected.” Infidelity (paradoxical as it may seem to say so) is often very credulous. “CASUALLY!” Does Mr. Belsham then intend to shew us that he has a very mean opinion of the sacred writers? Was Luke’s writing a gospel superfluous, the world being abundantly supplied with accounts equally valuable? Or does he intend to shew what an exalted opinion he has formed of the writers of that age? Does Mr. Belsham seriously believe, that writers equal to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were commonly to be met with? Does he indeed believe, that such epistles as those of Paul and Peter were common? Surely, if the most extravagant fanatic in this country should cast his eye upon this, he may be assured that Mr. Belsham cannot, with a good grace, be his reprover.

3. “We know not by whom.” If so, how do we know that they were *casually* selected? On what authority does Mr. Belsham make this extraordinary assertion?

“*Casually* selected.” As well might it be said, that the sun, moon, and stars were casually selected from a great number of luminaries of equal splendor! It was not from Dr. Lardner, Mr. Belsham imbibed this opinion. Dr. Lardner, when speaking of some ancient spurious writers, remarks, that “we have a great deal of reason to be pleased, to find that the ancient Christians were ever cautious what writings they received as the works of apostles, or apostolical men; and that

having exercised a judicious critique, they stomached such compositions as these, and rejected them with abhorrence." vol. iv. p. 247.

Dr. Paley has shewn, "that the authenticity of their books was a subject among the early Christians of consideration and inquiry; and that where there was cause of doubt, they did doubt; a circumstance which strengthens very much their testimony to such books as were received by them with full acquiescence." *Evidences*, vol. i. p. 269. Tertullian calls the gospels "our Digesta," in allusion, as it should seem, to some collection of Roman laws then extant. (*Paley*, i. 237.) Does Mr. Belsham suppose that the Roman laws were "casually selected" too?

Perhaps it may be said, this is only setting up opinion against opinion—authority against authority—what is the fact? We cannot undertake to give here the history of the Canon; but, after some diligent inquiry, we believe the fact to be this: that there was a great battle of books for at least a hundred years, and the genuine sacred books gained the victory. No miracle was wrought. No selection was made, much less a casual one. No Synod was called, no Council was held for this purpose. The Council of Laodicea, A. D. 364, and others in like manner, could only express publicly their acquiescence in what had been done long before. The books spoke for themselves, claimed a hearing, and, after much clamour and uproar, they were heard with profound silence. Public opinion reported the names of the authors. At first, living witnesses consented, who might have contradicted, if they had been able. Writers of the next and following ages quoted them. These writers were quoted by others in succession, and thus the long traditionary chain was formed. The sacred books had three characteristics: 1. They were read in the churches as by divine authority. 2. They were referred to as decisive in matters of controversy. 3. They were registered in catalogues, by Christians of different nations, in widely distant places. The first catalogue we have is that

of Origen, A. D. 210. Jeremiah Jones has given us a table exhibiting thirteen catalogues, which all agree substantially, and afford to the enquirer the highest satisfaction. Thus it appears the sacred books made their way by the force of evidence, and were received as the genuine productions of the writers whose names they bear, in the same manner as the Greek and Roman classics were received. They were received as Jesus himself was, after his resurrection: at first, "some doubted," but, in time, all were convinced. Innumerable writings, and many of them, no doubt, composed by very honest and well meaning men, sunk into oblivion. Such publications are referred to in Luke's preface to his gospel, and we have no reason to regret the loss of them. Whatever issued from the royal mint of heaven, bore a stamp peculiarly its own; and, in time, the King's image and superscription were fully recognized. The reader, who desires to pursue this subject, may find a great deal of valuable information in Dupin on the Canon—Jeremiah Jones's new and full Method of settling the Canon—Lardner's Credibility—Bishop Cosin's Scholastic History of the Canon—Nye and Richardson's Replies to Toland—Dr. John Blair's Lectures on the Canon—Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament—Paley's Evidences, &c.

Justin Martyr.

In pages 46 and 50, Mr. Belsham tells us, that the baptism of the infant descendants of baptized persons is clearly alluded to by this eminent apologist. Query, Has Justin Martyr alluded to the baptism of any except proselytes? Can Mr. Belsham point out the passage?

Evidence superior to Scripture Evidence.

In page 9, Mr. Belsham says, "And though we cannot produce the testimony of scripture, we produce evidence fully equivalent to that of scripture: nay, if possible, even superior to scripture evidence itself; for it is that upon which we actually receive the scriptures;

namely, the uniform, universal, undisputed testimony of Christian antiquity." This is very weak, or very wicked, or both. The writer confounds the evidence of the genuineness of the books with the authority which accompanies their contents. Mr. Belsham studiously lessens the value of scripture, yet he strives hard, in many places, to attach apostolical, i. e. divine authority to infant baptism. We readily admit that infant baptism is an ancient practice, but it is not ancient enough to have any authority with us. Many other parts of Popery are very ancient too; but, as one says, "Custom without reason is an old overgrown mistake." What if it could be shewn that it was commonly practised in the days of the apostles, or during the ministry of our Lord: if it were even allowed to have been practised by the apostles, what is that to us? Their practices are nothing to us, except in those instances in which they must be regarded as an exemplification of the precepts of our divine Master. His will is all in all. And this applies with all its force, in our judgment, to the religious observance of the first day of the week. We could not, with a good conscience, be followers of the apostles, if we did not believe that they were acting according to the will of him who is "Lord also of the Sabbath day," and who has honoured the first day of the week by affixing to it his own name, so that from the time of John it has been commonly designated "the Lord's day." Rev. i. 10.

(To be concluded in our next.)

Stories, explanatory of the Church Catechism; by Mrs. Sherwood, author of Little Henry and his Bearer, &c. &c.

It was required under the legal dispensation, that paternal affection should be expressed by teaching the children what great things Jehovah had effected in favour of their parents and ancestors; and that as far as it could be accomplished, the services of the Jewish religion should be explained. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and

when he is old he will not depart from it," is a divine precept; and in the land of perfect light and purity, and in the way to that better country, there are very many who have been greatly benefitted by the instructions to which they listened in childhood; stories were laid up in the memory for future use, or impressions were made on the heart which nothing afterwards could entirely remove. When, therefore, the pious and ingenious, and well informed, apply themselves to this pleasing and very salutary work, we are much gratified in having an opportunity to commend their well accomplished design. The work before us, as the title announces, is intended to explain the Catechism used in the Episcopal Church of England; and, if we could believe every part of that compendium, we might, without violating our consciences, recommend it as a tolerably good book, having faults of no great magnitude, and certainly intended to communicate useful knowledge, and to produce genuine piety. We should admire the character and general demeanour of Mrs. Brown, the chief personage in the work, and say that the majority of the stories are natural and striking—that the manners, follies, and immoralities of persons in particular employments and situations are usefully described—and that the general theology merits approbation. It might, certainly, for the sake of dealing righteously with the public, be added, that some of the stories are not natural; that little Mary, to whom they are related, often answers in a way far above her years; that the theology is sometimes either far from correct, or badly expressed—as at page 37, where it is said, that if we could perfectly love God, laws and commandments would be of no use any longer: in page 198 it is said, that the Lord Jesus Christ sometimes allows us to feel the vileness of our nature, &c.—this was a case of not being quite willing to pardon an enemy: now we think that such a disposition is not allowed for a moment. In pages 156, 158, 161, and 162, are very defective representations of human inability to

obey the law of God. As a specimen of the rest, we will give what is said in page 158: "When our father Adam sinned, he lost the power of doing well; and we, his children, through his fall, are in the same plight: we cannot do well." Had the author explained this inability, and said it was a defect of will, and therefore criminal, because God is holy in his nature, supreme in his dominion, and righteous in his authority, it had been well; but, as it is, sin looks too much like a mere calamity, and too little appears as an evil meriting condemnation. Here we should conclude, by giving a specimen of the style and tendency of the work, if it were not for some pestiferous errors, grounded on this Church Catechism—errors widely disseminated, and which, just as far as they are believed, effectually hinder the salvation of the immortal soul. In the instance to which we allude, we regard this Catechism as among the most pernicious of all human works—there is nothing worse in Paganism, nor in Popery, nor in Infidelity. This summary of national faith informs us, that when a child is baptized, he is made "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Now, every word of this is false; and not only so, it is the most injurious of erroneous statements: because, as this is the only world in which the salvation of God is applied to mankind, whatever induces us to neglect that reception of it which is essential to eternal blessedness, is, so far as this is its tendency, very detestable and pernicious. And, can any statement that could possibly be made be more likely to accomplish this, than the one we feel it to be our imperious duty to reprobate? And is it not a fact, that millions in the British empire neglect regeneration, and live in stupid insensibility with respect to faith and holiness, believing themselves to be good Christians already, on account of this ceremony of sprinkling or crossing in infancy? We lament that our author, who has done so well in other parts of her work on the nature of regeneration, should, through

slavish subjection to human authority in matters of religion, or any other cause, have fallen into any representations odious in themselves, and contradictory to other parts of her own work. For instance, in page 5, little Mary is made to say to a dear child, who had been, as it is said, baptized—"Now, my sweet baby, you are one of God's little flock; and fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom:" and this passes, without any animadversion, as sound truth. But mark the difference between this babe and the persons to whom the Redeemer applied the passage in Luke, xii. 32. This was said to Peter and others who had believed on him—they were a little flock in respect to their number—they had been immersed on a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ. Mrs. Brown is made to be very consistent, when informing Mary of what was effected in baptism; for, in page 8, she asks, "Can you tell me, my dear, whose child little Charles was made when he was baptized?" Mary answers, "He was made God's child when he was baptized." So again, at the bottom of the page, she is made to say the same thing; and the error is in many places beside repeated. The sectarian prejudices of our author appear in several places. In page 182, she represents the blessedness of an English village as superior to an Indian bazaar, because in the former there is a church and a clergyman. Alas! alas! how much better it would have been to have said, because there is a spiritual church of God, and a faithful minister of Christ? no matter as to the great point of what denomination. In page 233, our author describes the visible church of Christ as a congregation of persons who say that they are Christians, &c. Say that they are Christians!! Oh, no—it consists of those who, as far as we can judge, are Christians indeed. In page 230 she informs us, that Christ commanded his disciples to go and baptize all people, &c. No—he commanded them to disciple them first, and when they had believed, to immerse them.

In page 190 we are told, that the New Testament will be soon printed in Hindoostanee! This appears in a book printed in the year 1817: now the Baptist missionaries have been in India since the year 1793, and in this year, 1817, have translated, in whole or in part, the scriptures into most of the languages and dialects of India. Sixteen years have elapsed since they worked off the first sheet of the Bengalee New Testament; and in the Hindoostanee it has been printed several years. These holy, highly-gifted, disinterested, and incessantly active men of God have beside what they have effected in translating, printing, and distributing the word of life, preached the gospel in all parts of India to millions of its inhabitants, distributed thousands of tracts, evangelical hymns, and useful books; and yet, in a publication containing Indian stories, in which, as it is expressed, a Hindoostanee version of the New Testament is expected, not a sentence is written about these benevolent missionaries, or their brethren of other denominations. How often does the shade of a cathedral chill the blood of an author!!

A Plea for the Non-conformists, showing the true State of their Case, and how far the Conformists' Separation from the Church of Rome, for their Popish Superstitions, &c. introduced into the Service of God, justifies the Non-conformists' Separation from them; in a Letter to Dr. Benjamin Calamy, on his Sermon, called Scrupulous Conscience, inviting thereto: to which is added, a Parallel Scheme of the Pagan, Papal, and Christian Rites and Ceremonies. By Thomas De Laune.

THE sight of a new edition of this invaluable work, written in the village of Honiton-Cliff, near Exeter, brings to our recollection the lamented fate of the writer, one of the worthies of our denomination; among whom it was first understood and published, that liberty of conscience in religion is the unalienable right of all men; and we may add, with gratitude to God, that, though possessing power to have done it, the Baptist denomination has never

incurred the guilt of spilling the blood of other Christians, who were of different sentiments.

From the preface to the reader it appears, that this book has been printed at least seven times; and without doubt, if the adversaries of the dissenters were for coming to the test, either of scripture, reason, or antiquity, it would before now have received some answer. In this most excellent treatise, the reasons for non-conformity are fairly and modestly stated, and we never expect to see them solidly proved to be unsound. We thank God that this is not the age nor the country in which sober arguments are answered, to borrow the words of the preface, (written by Daniel De Foe,) with severe coercives: we do not now dispute by the gaol and the hangman—by the prison, and not by the pen. Had it been always so, our brother De Laune, as he did, had not died. He was a man of great merit, distinguished by a sound and penetrating understanding, extensive learning, and great ability in argument. Like Stephen, he could not be answered, and his enemies remembered he could be murdered. He perished, with thousands beside, in prison, in the days of Charles II.; and his crime was, his dissent from the Church of England, which he defended in a manner his enemies could not withstand. Dr. Benjamin Calamy (a dissenting renegade,) had charged the dissenters with contumacy, obstinacy, ignorance, and ungrounded prejudice; but we only wish the book before us to be read with attention, and it will appear manifest to all to whom ignorance and obstinacy attached—Goliath defied the hosts of Israel, and David slew him with the means approved of God. Thomas De Laune, for this good service, was sentenced to pay a fine of 100 marks: the expensive prosecution had deprived him of his means of subsistence, and he could not pay it. In Newgate, in a state of close confinement, he continued about fifteen months, suffering greatly from extreme poverty. With invincible patience, and true greatness of soul, he endured these barbarous and inhuman severities; but

long confinement, with various other distresses, at length reduced him to debility, and to death. His dear wife, and two small children, having no subsistence, were obliged to tenant the prison which oppression had assigned him; in which they all expired before De Launc ascended himself to the rest which remains for the faithful servants of God. 66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* would have saved the life of this most excellent man; but the dissenters of that day did not so attend to his case as to raise it: from what causes this disgraceful neglect, and apparent ingratitude arose, it is not necessary to inquire; but we say, as good Mr. Sharp, one of the former pastors of the church at Frome, used to express himself on the subject, "Had I been a minister at that time, I would have taken my horse and rode till my skin was off, but I would have got the money to pay his fine." We are happy to know that the dissenters of our day would, in a similar case, raise in one week ten times that sum. We are grateful to God that it is not likely to be necessary in our favoured land, and that if such exertion were necessary, it would instantly be made.

The design of this publication is to evince the necessity of toleration, the mischief of persecution, and that the reasons for dissent from the Church of England are far better than many persons suppose.

This work is invaluable, and nothing in our language deserves more attention; it contains much curious and very useful information, communicated in a manner singularly clear and compressed.

A brief Account of the Reasons which have induced the Rev. T. Cowan, late of Trinity College, Dublin, to secede from the Established Church: addressed to those who composed his Congregation while he officiated at the Church of St. Thomas, Bristol.
Price 1*s.* 6*d.*

THE controversy which has lately been carried on by eminent ministers of the Established Church, on the doctrine of "Baptismal Regeneration," was likely to produce an alteration of sentiment in the minds

of some, respecting the *manner* in which that ordinance should be administered, and the *persons* who were its proper subjects. An instance of this kind is presented by this pamphlet, which every unbiased mind must pronounce to be the production of an ardent honest mind. We are not acquainted with the writer: and feel under no temptation to use any congratulations on his having imbibed our views respecting baptism and dissent: because in our opinion he has still much to learn before his principles have reached their ultimate extent. We do not wonder that the frank and manly avowal of his sentiments, and the exposure which he has made of the erroneous principles contained in the Liturgy of the Church of England, has exposed him to censure and obloquy. Such persons, however, who charge him with schism, &c. will do well to hearken to his defence, before they proceed to pass sentence upon him as a heretic!

There is another part of the subject which more seriously affects our minds. Mr. Cowan, who writes like a faithful servant of Christ, has spoken of those persons "who talk of progressive sanctification, and of the law, being a rule of life to believers;" as not knowing their Bibles so well, nor living so close to God, as those who are "branded with the name of Antinomian." *Note*, page 44. Mr. Cowan will see, that instituting a comparison of this kind contains no argument in it: but certainly, if he avow the sentiment that *the law is not a rule of life for believers*, he must not be offended if he be called an Antinomian; and to say, "If this be Antinomianism, the Lord make me more Antinomian still, amen!" is very much like "glorying in his shame," and manifesting a carnal mind, which cannot be subject to the law of God!

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

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BAPTIST MISSION.

BATAVIA.

LETTERS have been received from Mr. and Mrs. Phillips at Batavia, from which the following are extracts :

"The only vessel we hailed on the passage was bound to Philadelphia. Since that period we have been apparently solitary in the watery world, but the watchful care of Heaven has preserved us from the perils of the tumultuous deep. Nearly 15,000 miles have we sailed without accident, and but few occurrences to excite alarm. On Christmas-day we cast anchor for the first time since we left England, and on December 27 we landed on the shore of Batavia, surrounded by Chinese, and the more singular Malays. The first intelligence we received was indeed of the most painful nature; on inquiring for the house of Mr. Robinson, we heard that dear Mr. Trowt had been removed by death. We found Mr. Robinson in a comfortable residence, about three miles from Batavia, and there we learned the sad tale of woe was true. We are bent, indeed, but not too much cast down, by this blast of sorrow. All we could do was, to remain with Mr. Robinson till we could gain some knowledge of the language. We find that Mr. Bruckner is pursuing the study of the Javanese."

From Mr. Phillips, dated April 1, 1817. "Our ship's crew being composed principally of Lascars, I had no opportunity of preaching; but every Sabbath afternoon Mrs. Phillips officiated as chaplain, by reading Mr. Evans's sermons in the cabin to the captain and our fellow-passengers. There was one black lad on board, about seventeen years of age, servant to the chief officer, in whom we both felt much interested. He is a native of one of the Fejee islands, and belonged to a race of cannibals. In one of those battles which frequently fall out between the different tribes, this lad, with three or four others, was taken prisoner; his father and mother had been killed, and the whole town in which they lived was

burnt. The conquering party, according to their custom, were about to kill the boy and their other prisoners, and to devour them; when, providentially, he made his escape, by running to a Chinese merchant, who had visited the island for trade. This Chinese protected him, kept him as his servant for two years, and afterwards gave him as a slave to the chief officer of our ship. This gentleman has taken great care of him, and I suppose on no consideration would either of them be willing to part from the other. One day perceiving him look into one of my books, I asked him if he could read? he replied, 'No, Sir.' I then asked him if he were willing to learn, if I would teach him? He said, that if I would take the trouble, he would feel obliged to me, and would endeavour to learn. We then began, and before I left the ship, he was able to read words of two letters tolerably well; and when I was leaving the ship, he promised me that he would persevere in reading the good books (tracts) which I gave him. I used sometimes to read parts of the Bible to him, and to endeavour to explain to him the great truth, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. There is a great deal of benevolence and generosity in his character; and though he has nearly forgotten his native language through disuse, he can speak English, Malay, and Bengalee tolerably well. As his master intends some time or other to take a voyage to the island, and to take him with him, I think that possibly the boy might be the means of diffusing knowledge, if he had previously acquired it; this induced me to spend a little time with him.

"We are now in the place which has been termed 'the grave of Europeans;' but, through mercy, we have no reason to complain of the unhealthiness of the climate. The heat of the sun is intense, but owing to a land breeze which sets in about eleven o'clock at night, and lasts till nine in the morning; and a sea breeze which sets in about noon, and lasts till seven or eight in the evening, we can manage to keep ourselves tolerably cool. Excepting a short attack of the fever, which I had soon after I arrived, we both have had our health very well.

We were very much amused on our first arrival, to observe the singular manners of the Chinese and Malays; but we now begin to get familiarized with them. I consider the Chinese as a very interesting set of people; without them Java would be a very poor place indeed. They work at all sorts of trades, carry on every kind of business, and are very industrious. As no Chinese women are allowed to emigrate from China, the men marry Malay women, and there are now in Java thousands who call themselves Chinese, who have descended from these persons. Mr. Robinson considers them as being the most hopeful description of persons, as they are not so bigotted to the idolatry of the Chinese as their fathers are, nor have they such a reverence for Mahomet as their mothers. The Malays are a sullen set of people, many of them are slaves; they are of a copper colour, stoutly built, and have continually in their mouths a mixture of betel nut, serree, and tobacco, of which they chew so much as to dye their lips and teeth with a very deep red tinge. They are kept in the greatest ignorance by their priests, and whenever a missionary mentions the name of Jesus, they will endeavour to put an end to the conversation as soon as possible. We are indeed in a land of darkness, superstition, and idolatry. There are upwards of three millions of souls here, who know not the way in which sinners can be saved. I earnestly desire to be able to preach to them, with the hope that the God of missions will prosper our undertaking. Our circumstances try both faith and patience; we feel much the loss of Christian society, but if we are but made useful, we shall not repent having made any sacrifices. The Master whose we are, and whom we serve, will abundantly compensate for every privation we may undergo.

"I wish that it were in my power to send you an account of thousands flocking to the standard of the cross, and renouncing all their dependence upon Mahomet, by believing in Christ alone; but this pleasing information I cannot yet communicate. There is but little curiosity among the Malays, and they seem to rest satisfied if there be one man in a campong, (so their villages are called,) who can pray. Last evening, I went with Mr. Robinson to a newly-erected village, inhabited by persons who have emigrated from Bali, a village contiguous to Java. We saw two or three men together at a house, and we went to them. Mr. Robinson then spoke to them in Malay, and asked them whether they

had a man who could pray in their village? They said they had not, and assigned as the reason that they had but lately erected the place, and had not yet obtained a priest. He then asked if any of them could read Malay? A young man was then fetched, who said he could. Mr. Robinson gave him a tract, and asked him to read it to the people. He did not, however, like to do this. 'Well,' said Mr. Robinson, 'sit down, and I will read.' They seemed pleased, and sat down, or rather squatted down on the ground. He then read and explained a part of the tract, asked them questions, and succeeded in gaining their assent to what was said as being true. I understood the greater part of the conversation, and was gratified at beholding their attention. After inviting them to attend the Malay worship which we have at our own house, and giving away a few more tracts, we returned home, and held our weekly prayer meeting for the spread of the gospel."

REV. DR. CAREY.

We are happy to present our readers with the following extract of a letter from Mr. Lindeman of Calcutta, to Mr. Burls, dated April 1, 1817.

"We have just returned from hearing Dr. Carey preach: he has been ill; but is (praised be the Lord) quite restored."

AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION.

IN Burmah, the press has already, by the labours of brethren Judson and Hough, commenced its useful career, having specially in view the object of giving the Bible to that nation, and the surrounding nations, in their own language. Religious tracts will also be printed there.

Extract of a Letter from Mrs. Judson, dated Rangoon, June 14, 1816.

"I have just been reading over your kind, affectionate letter, for which I sincerely thank you. I should have answered it before, but multiplicity of business prevented. You ask, my dear Mrs. Lovett, 'Is not the mission attended with more difficulties and dangers than you anticipated?' I answer, perhaps they are of a different kind from what I formerly imagined. As it respects real personal suffering, I have

never realized more than I anticipated ; or rather, I have felt a greater support under trials than I expected. But the almost insurmountable difficulty of acquiring a foreign language, and of communicating religious knowledge to the dark mind of a heathen, cannot be known by any but those who make the trial. In a short time one can get enough of a language for common use. But to think, to reason, and to get hold of the little connections and idiom of a language entirely different from one's native tongue, is quite another thing. Then, after the language is in a tolerable degree acquired, new terms must be invented to give them right ideas of a Being of whom they are entirely ignorant. But the difficulties do not stop here. The mind, in its native state, is slow to receive new ideas. Very little can be received at a time, and that little constantly repeated, or it is soon obliterated. But even when truth is received and retained, if it is received with the notion that self has no concern in it, it has no effect. O how utterly impossible it is that these Burmans can be converted by any other than the power of God ! This is our only hope ; this alone keeps us from discouragement and despair, and will continue to encourage us, so long as we have such examples of distinguishing power and grace before us as the conversion of the Otahaitans. The conversion of a nation wholly idolatrous, is not the work of a day or year. Though it is infinitely easy for God to effect it even in so short a time, yet he has not seen fit thus to operate ; nor have we any reason to hope that he will vary so far from his usual method of operation. The scriptures must be translated, tracts circulated, schools established, and a spirit of inquiry excited, before we can hope to see any essential alterations. The natives must have time to examine the effects of a new religion, by observing the conduct of the missionaries, before they will be willing to renounce their old. Alas ! what can one single missionary do in a country where thousands are needed ! And yet, should a host of missionaries arrive, it might at once destroy this little beginning, by exciting the suspicions of the natives, naturally jealous, and occasion a total banishment of every missionary. Thus we are compelled to see the miseries of this people, groping in thick darkness, without being able to relieve them ; and knowing also it must be some time before any thing can be effected. But, my dear Mrs. Lovett, we are not idle ; we feel we

have but one object on earth, and we make every thing bend to this. Mr. Judson has completed a tract, (a summary of the Christian religion,) and a grammar in the Burman language, which are now ready for printing. He has also got some way in the translation of the scriptures.

"I must now finish this long letter, requesting you will follow my example in its length. Remember us affectionately to all our friends. That we may meet in heaven, and spend an eternity together, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate

NANCY JUDSON."

Extract of a Letter from Dr. Carey to Dr. Staughton of Philadelphia, dated July 23, 1816.

"I am, as usual, quite busy with the translations of the Word, which have now become so numerous, that the mere reading of the proof-sheets would occupy the whole of a person's time. It is true, my acquaintance with the Sungskrit language makes it easy for me to acquire a competent knowledge of all those derived from it ; especially as nine out of ten of the words current in them are either entirely pure Sungskrit, or so evidently derived from it as to be easily recognized. All the versions, except five, are of this sort. That, therefore, which would be hard labour to any person about to begin the study of any one of these languages, without a previous knowledge of the source from which it is derived, and which could not in that way be extended to many of them, is to me easy, being previously acquainted with seven-eighths of the words. I consider this as a circumstance for which I am bound to be grateful to God, as it enables me to carry on this work with much greater certainty, and to a much greater extent, than I could possibly have done without it.

"The Pushto, spoken by the Affghans, undoubtedly the remains of the ten tribes, is on that account highly interesting to me. It abounds in Hebrew and Arabic words, but contains also some of Sungskrit origin, and many which are probably received from the Tartars, who inhabit the countries north of them. Much indeed shall I rejoice, if I may be successful in giving that portion of the ancient people of God, the word of truth in their own language."

Extract of a Letter from Mr. Judson to Mr. Rice, dated Rangoon, November 14, 1816.

"My beloved brother Rice;—In encouraging other young men to come out as missionaries, do use the greatest caution. You have hit right in brother Hough; but one wrong-headed, conscientiously obstinate fellow, would ruin us. Humble, quiet, persevering men; men of sound, sterling talents (though perhaps not brilliant,) of decent accomplishments, and some natural aptitude to acquire a language; men of an amiable, yielding temper, willing to take the lowest place, to be the least of all, and the servant of all; men who enjoy much closet religion, who live near to God, and are willing to suffer all things for Christ's sake, without being proud of it: these are the men, &c. But O, how unlike to this description is the writer of it! Still, however, I am, with never-ceasing affection, your most affectionate brother in the Lord,

A. JUDSON.

The two brethren, James Colman and Edward W. Wheelock, accepted by the Board for the Burman mission, will soon, with permission of Providence, take their departure from this country. It is hoped, too, that the time is not far distant, when others will follow; particularly some one who, like Luke 'the beloved physician' of apostolic times, shall further the work of the Lord by an acquaintance with the healing art. The testimony of their tutor, Mr. Chaplin, it is proper here to insert. After giving a particular statement of the proficiency made by them respectively in literature, he thus concludes:—"In closing this communication I beg leave to add, that as far as the acquaintance I have had with them, enables me to judge, they are modest, amiable, and pious young men; judicious in their views, and prudent in their conduct: and they both appear to me to be uncommonly promising as candidates for the gospel ministry." Their own letters of application to the Board follow:

"Danvers, April 5, 1817.

"Honoured Fathers in Christ;—It is with a deep sense of my unworthiness to engage in the service of God, and my insufficiency for it, that I now address you. May God direct my pen, and enable me to write in such a manner as shall afford you satisfaction.

"My mind has long been deeply

impressed with the glorious work of evangelizing the heathen; and I have long felt a settled conviction that, should the Lord be pleased to grant me an opportunity, it will be my indispensable duty to engage in this arduous, this all-important work. From the commencement of my Christian experience, my mind has been deeply affected with the deplorable state of the poor heathen. Nearly three years since, I wrote two letters to the Rev. Dr. Staughton, who was the instrument employed by a gracious God to awaken my attention to the things which belong to my everlasting peace. In those letters I stated my Christian experience, my exercises relative to preaching, and those also relative to going to the heathen. As Dr. Staughton, if you request it, will, I trust, favour you with those communications, it will be needless for me, at this time, to be minute upon the subjects to which they relate. My mind has ever remained as it was when I wrote him, except that my desire to be employed as a missionary to the heathen, and my devotedness to the cause of missions, have, I trust, much increased. Indeed, language fails me when I attempt to describe my feelings on this subject. 'Thought is poor, and poor expression.'

"To you, honoured fathers, is my mind directed, as to those who, under God, must decide my case. To you I offer, freely and joyfully offer myself, to become your missionary, to aid those already under your patronage, in turning the poor Burmans 'from idols, to serve the living and true God.' And, O! if it is consistent, that one so unworthy, and so unqualified as myself, should engage in this glorious work, deny me not, I beseech you, the unspeakable privilege; deny me not the fondest, the most ardent desire of my soul that can, in this world, be gratified. To deny me this, would be to deprive me of the greatest happiness which, in this world, I can possibly enjoy. I had rather be a missionary of the cross than a king on a throne. Let the men of this world possess its glittering toys; let the miser grasp his cankered gold; let the voluptuary enjoy his sordid pleasures; let the ambitious ascend to the pinnacle of earthly honour; but let me enjoy the sweet satisfaction of directing the poor Pagans to 'the Lamb of God.' I court no greater good; I desire no greater joy; I seek no greater honour. To Burmah would I go; in Burmah would I live; in Burmah would I toil; in Burmah would I die; and in Burmah would I be buried.

"Honoured fathers, I leave myself at your disposal, willing, if you desire it, to sail immediately for Burmah; and praying, ardently praying, the great Head of the church to direct you to the adoption of such measures, respecting myself and the Zion of God, as shall best promote his glory, and the salvation of the heathen. I am your very unworthy,

EDWARD W. WHELOCK.

"P.S. For a knowledge of my character and literary attainments, I refer you to the communication made you by my highly esteemed tutor."

American Intelligencer.

(To be continued.)

Extract of a Letter from Mr. R. Oliver, dated Newark, America, May 4, 1817, to his brother John at Haddenham.

"Dear brother;—As you wished me

to send all the good news I could concerning the Redeemer's kingdom in America; the circumstances which have transpired in my immediate neighbourhood will rejoice your heart.

"When I first came here, there appeared no life in religion; but now, hundreds are flocking to Christ. The revival began among the Presbyterians, of which here are two churches; I hear there are about a hundred to join one of them to day. We have one Baptist church, where I attend. About seven weeks back, the ice was broken in order to baptize eight in the river; two weeks after, seven more were baptized; since that, eleven more have been baptized; and to day six more are expected, one of whom is the eldest daughter of our brother Williams.

"The work of the Lord is going on, and many more are about to say, We will go with you also, for the Lord is with you of a truth."

Domestic Religious Intelligence.

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of this Society was held at Oxford on Sept. 30 and Oct. 1, 1817.

The Committee assembled in the afternoon of the former day, and in the evening a sermon was preached by Mr. Birt, of Birmingham, from Isaiah, liii. 11, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied." Mr. Ivimey, of London, commenced in prayer, and Mr. Birt concluded. At half-past six the next morning, a public meeting was held for prayer, when the following brethren engaged—Davies, of Oakingham; Welsh, of Newbury; Walton, of Cheltenham; Saffery, of Salisbury; and Adam, about to sail as a missionary to the East Indies.

At half-past ten assembled again for public worship. Mr. Cox, and Dr. Newman, of London, engaged in prayer; Mr. Hughes, of Battersea, preached, from Heb. xiii. 16; Mr. Hall, of Leicester, from 1 Cor. i. 18; and the service was closed by Dr. Ryland, of Bristol.

In the afternoon the Society met for business, and after prayer by Mr. Morgan, of Birmingham.

It was moved by Mr. Hinton, seconded by Mr. Jarman, and resolved unanimously,

1 That William Burls, Esq. of London, do take the chair.

The minutes of the last meeting were then read by Dr. Ryland; who proceeded afterwards to read various extracts of intelligence lately received from our missionaries; on which it was moved by Dr. Newman, and seconded by Mr. Coles,

2. That the substance of the Report now given be printed and distributed under the direction of the Committee.

Mr. Hinton moved, and Mr. Joseph Hall seconded,

3. That the thanks of the Society be given to Mr. King, the Treasurer, for his past services, and that he be requested to continue them another year.

On the motion of Mr. Cox, seconded by Mr. Edmunds, it was resolved unanimously,

4. That the thanks of the Society be given to Dr. Ryland and Mr. Hinton, the Secretaries, for their services, and

that they be requested to continue them another year.

Dr. Ryland expressed his willingness to continue in his office, but Mr. Hinton felt himself under the necessity of presenting a letter of resignation, on which it was moved by Dr. Ryland, and seconded by Mr. Blundell, and resolved unanimously,

5. That the Society receive with deep and unfeigned regret Mr. Hinton's resignation of the office of Secretary; and desire publicly to record the high sense they entertain of the many valuable, important, and disinterested services he has rendered the Society in that capacity.

On the motion of Mr. Saffery, seconded by Dr. Steadman, it was resolved unanimously,

6. That in consequence of Mr. Hinton's resignation, Mr. Dyer, of Reading, be requested to accept the office of Assistant Secretary for the ensuing year.

To which Mr. Dyer acceded.

It was moved by Mr. Gray, of Chip-ping Norton, seconded by W. B. Gurney, Esq. and resolved unanimously,

7. That the thanks of the Society be given to the Committee for their services, and that the following brethren constitute the Committee for the ensuing year:

1. Anderson, Rev. C. Edinburgh.
2. Barclay, Rev. G. Kilwinning.
3. Birt, Rev. Isaiah, Birmingham.
4. Birt, Rev. John, Hull.
5. Blundell, Rev. Tho. Northampton.
6. Burls, William, Esq. London.
7. Coles, Rev. T. Bourton-on-the-Water.
8. Cox, Rev. F. A. Hackney.
9. Deakin, James, Esq. Glasgow.
10. Dent, Mr. Joseph, Milton.
11. Edmonds, Rev. Tho. Cambridge.
12. Fawcett, Rev. John, Ewood Hall.
13. Hall, Rev. Robert, Leicester.
14. Hall, Rev. J. K. Kettering.
15. Hall, Joseph, Esq. Northampton.
16. Hinton, Rev. James, Oxford.
17. Hobson, Mr. James, Kettering.
18. Hogg, Rev. Reynold, Kimbolton.
19. Hughes, Rev. J. Battersea.
20. Innes, Rev. W. Edinburgh.
21. Ivimey, Rev. J. London.
22. Jarman, Rev. J. Nottingham.
23. Kinghorn, Rev. J. Norwich.
24. Lomax, Mr. J. Nottingham.
25. Morgan, Rev. T. Birmingham.
26. Newman, Rev. Dr. Stepney.
27. Nicholls, Rev. W. L. Collingham.
28. Page, Rev. Henry, Bristol.
29. Palmer, Rev. John, Shrewsbury.
30. Potts, Thomas, Esq. Birmingham.
31. Ragsdell, Rev. W. Thrapstone.
32. Roberts, Rev. Thomas, Bristol.

23. Saffery, Rev. J. Salisbury.
34. Shaw, Benj. Esq. M. P. London.
35. Steadman, Rev. Dr. Bradford.
36. Thomas, Rev. Thomas, Peckham.
37. Thomas, Rev. Micah, Abergavenny.
38. Tomkins, W. Esq. Abingdon.
39. Wilks, Rev. Mark, Norwich.
40. Wilson, Mr. W. Olney.
41. Winterbotham, Rev. W. Horsley.
42. Yates, Mr. John, Leicester.

On the motion of Mr. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Dyer, it was resolved unanimously,

8. That this meeting thankfully acknowledge the aid rendered to the Society by Thomas Potts and J. C. Gotch, Esqrs. as Auditors of accounts, and that they be requested to act in that capacity for the year ensuing.

It was moved by Mr. Morgan, seconded by Mr. John Hall, and resolved unanimously,

9. That the following Rules and Regulations, submitted in conformity to the 6th Resolution of the annual meeting held at Northampton in 1815, be adopted as the plan of the Society.

Name.

I. The name by which this Society has been, and still is designated, is, "The Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen; or, The Baptist Missionary Society."

Object.

II. The great object of this Society is, the diffusion of the knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ through the heathen world, by means of the preaching of the gospel, the translation and publication of the Holy Scriptures, and the establishment of schools.

Members.

III. All persons subscribing 10s. 6d. per annum; donors of 10l. or upwards, and ministers making annual collections on behalf of the Society, are considered as members thereof.

General Meeting.

IV. A general meeting of the Society shall be held annually in the month of October, at which the Committee, the Treasurer, Secretary, or Secretaries, shall be chosen for the year ensuing; the Auditors of accounts appointed, and any other business pertaining to the Society transacted.

Management.

V. The affairs of this Society shall be

conducted by a Committee, annually chosen from among its members, including a Treasurer and Secretaries. The number of the Committee to be 42, besides the officers of the Society. Five members are considered competent to transact business. Every proposition to be determined by the majority of votes.

VI. That meetings of the Committee be held regularly in the months of March, June, and October, and on any other occasion when necessity shall require, regular notices being given by the Secretary.

VII. All moneys received on behalf of the Society shall be lodged in the hands of the Treasurer; and when the amount shall exceed 300*l.* it shall be invested in the public funds in the names of four trustees, to be chosen by the Society, until required for the use of the mission.

On the motion of Mr. Birt, seconded by Mr. Winterbotham, it was unanimously resolved,

10. That the next annual meeting of this Society be held at Bristol, in the first week of October, 1818.

Mr. Burls having left the chair, it was moved by Mr. Saffery, seconded by Mr. Winterbotham, and resolved unanimously,

11. That the thanks of this meeting be given to William Burls, Esq. for his able conduct in the chair; after which, the meeting was closed in prayer.

Mr. Ivimey preached in the evening at the Methodist meeting, from 1 Cor. x. 4.

NOTICE.

Some unforeseen circumstances prevented the Treasurer from presenting his accounts at the annual meeting: they will be communicated next month through the medium of this Magazine.

Those friends who receive moneys on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society, are requested, in future, to transmit their accounts *quarterly* to the Treasurer, made up to the first days of May, August, November, and February respectively.

By a steady adherence to this necessary regulation, the Treasurer will be relieved from some inconveniences which have hitherto attended making up the annual accounts; and the Committee will be enabled to present to their friends and the public, through the medium of this Magazine, a quarterly statement of the sums received, without delaying the acknowledgment till the publication of the Periodical Accounts.

BAPTIST IRISH SOCIETY.

THE itinerants of the above Society, in their tours, have frequently preached in the market-house at Athlone: but during the last year, that place being occupied for the use of the town, the Society has taken a place, and prepared it for preaching.

For some months past, the Rev. William Thomas has directed his attention to Athlone, and preached there regularly on the Lord's-days and week-days. His ministry has been blessed to the conversion of several persons. Not long since, he baptized nine on a profession of faith. Mr. Thomas and his friends applied to Mr. West, of Dublin, to go and form them into a church. On Saturday, October 11, 1817, he went to visit them: after serious conversation with each individual, and being fully satisfied with their genuine piety and amiable conduct, on the following Lord's-day, having first given themselves to the Lord and to one another by the will of God, they were formed into a church of Christ. In the afternoon Mr. West administered the Lord's-supper to the newly formed church. Several of the friends from the Baptist church at Furbane, ten miles distant, came to Athlone that day; and nineteen persons received the Lord's-supper. It was a day long to be remembered by us all. Mr. West preached in the evening to a full meeting and an attentive congregation. The prospect is very encouraging.

God has prospered our way since the above Society was established. Six Baptist churches have been raised in Ireland, *viz.* Thurles, Furbane, Clonmel, Renaghmore (among the Palatines), the Ox Mountain, and at Athlone, the centre of Ireland. "May the little one become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation."

Dublin.

J. W.

ASSOCIATION.

IRELAND.

THE Baptist churches in Ireland, held their association at Waterford, on the 23d, 24th, 25th, and 26th of May, 1817.

Friday, May 23.—Met at eleven o'clock in the forenoon; the Rev. Mr. Davis preached, from 1 Thess. v. 25; the Rev. Thomas Clarke, pastor of the church at Waterford, was appointed

Moderator; the letters from the different churches were read by the Secretary; an application from a society of Baptists, at Rhanemore, county of Tipperary, to be admitted into association with our churches, was received, and they were admitted accordingly; a declaration of faith from a society at Sligo, was referred to the consideration of a Committee of three; consisting of Messrs. Davis, Rogers, and Allen, to be by them reported on. In the evening, Mr. M'Carthy preached, from Psalm xlix. 8.

Saturday, 24.—Prayer-meeting at seven o'clock, and met at half-past ten for business. *Note.* The services of Mr. Davis have been acceptable in the church of Dublin, and they have expressed their gratitude to him. With regard to the minute of last year, relative to the church of Cork, it is the opinion of this association, that it was unwarranted and injudicious; and we regret both its having passed, and the publicity given to it. We are at the same time free to say, that if messengers from Cork had been present, such information would have been given by them as would have prevented its occurrence. It is recommended that the several ministers attend to the catechetical instruction of the children; and we highly approve the conduct of Mr. Richards in this respect. It is also recommended, that Sunday schools be established by our several churches; the example of the churches in Dublin and Thurles in this respect is commended. We recommend to the several churches the necessity of pure discipline; and as an associated body, we pledge ourselves to assist in carrying the same into effect.

Sunday, 25.—Three sermons preached, after each a public collection for the Irish mission: Mr. Hassell, in the forenoon, from Isaiah, xl. 25, and following verses; Mr. West, in the afternoon, from Revelation, xiv. 4; Mr. Rogers, in the evening, from Hebrews, xii. 14.

Monday, 26.—Public prayer-meeting at seven o'clock in the morning. Mr. Davis preached at half-past ten o'clock, from Genesis, xv. 8. Met at half-past twelve for business.

Resolved, That the next association be held at Dublin; that the sermon on Friday be preached by Mr. Clarke, or in case of failure, by Mr. Hassell; and the association sermon on Sunday, by Mr. Richards, or in case of failure, by Mr. Davis.

Resolved, That Mr. West be requested to draw up the General Letter for next year, and the subject to be *Church Discipline*.

Resolved, That the General Letter of this year be printed. (Signed)

THOS. CLARKE, Moderator.

GEORGE YOUNG, Secretary.

Waterford, May 26, 1817.

Monday evening, Mr. Thomas preached, from John, i. 29; Tuesday evening, Mr. Rogers preached, from 1 John, iv. 10.

NEW CHURCHES FORMED.

CHESTERFIELD.

A church of the particular Baptist denomination was formed August 3, 1817, in the populous town of Chesterfield, Derbyshire. An address on the nature and order of a gospel-church was delivered by Mr. John Jones, of Sheffield; afterwards the brethren signified their willingness to unite for the worship of God, and keeping his ordinances, by holding up their right hands, and giving each other the right hand of fellowship. In the evening, two persons were baptized by Mr. Morton, (their present minister,) in a river adjoining the town, and were added to the church: Mr. Jones preached on the subject of believers' baptism, from Matt. xxviii. 19, to a very large and attentive assembly.

This church owes its origin to the blessing of God upon the labours of Mr. Morton, and the kindness of the Baptist friends at Sheffield, who generously defrayed his expenses in going there. The prospect is very pleasing.

CREDITON, DEVON.

ABOUT four years ago, a few pious persons, residing in the populous town of Crediton, were led, principally by curiosity, to witness the administration of believers' baptism at Exeter, and being thereby convinced that it was the scripture mode of baptizing, they were soon baptized, and joined the church at Exeter.

Some time after, at their invitation, Mr. Kilpin preached at Crediton, and several others were also baptized; a suitable house was taken, at a reasonable yearly rent, and two large rooms in it converted into one capable of accommodating near 200 hearers, was fitted up, on an economical plan, for divine worship.

The ministers of the Baptist churches at Exeter, Collumpton, Tiverton, and Bradninch, who preached there occasionally for twelve months, being much impressed with the zeal, affection, and

unanimity of the people, together with the population of 5,000 inhabitants in the town, beside 30 villages and towns within seven miles of it, very destitute of the means of religious improvement, were desirous of placing a minister there for a year, to preach the gospel, and establish Sunday schools, where practicable, in the town and villages, as a likely means of extending the blessings of the gospel through this destitute district. The congregation being chiefly poor people, they could not raise much towards the support of a minister; but Messrs. Humphrey and Sharp readily undertook to apply to the religious public for assistance; and, through the Divine blessing, they found so much encouragement from the benevolence of Christian friends, that they engaged a Mr. Mitchell for one year, who settled with them in January last. Since his residing at Crediton, the place of worship is crowded; five persons have been baptized in a river near the town, and his ministry appears to have been blessed to the awakening of several others, who are candidates for baptism.

During the last month, several of the above ministers assisted in forming the baptized persons, to the number of 21, into a Christian church, and the prospect is truly encouraging.

CASTLE CAMPS.

On Thursday, May 29, 1817, a church of the Baptist denomination was formed at Castle Camps, in Cambridgeshire; and on the same day, Mr. Wm. Jobson was ordained to the pastoral office over them. The following was the order of the services:—Mr. Bowers, of Haverhill, began by reading the scriptures and prayer, and also delivered the introductory discourse; Mr. King, of Halstead, prayed the ordination prayer, and gave the charge, from 2 Timothy, i. 15; Mr. Drake, of Ridgwell, preached to the people, from 1 Thess. iii. 8, and concluded. Since the ordination three other persons have been baptized, and added to the church.

NEW MEETINGS OPENED.

WOODNESBOROUGH.

On Whit-Monday last, May 26, a new neat small place of worship was opened at Woodnesborough, near Sandwich, Kent, when two sermons were preached; that in the afternoon by the Rev. John Giles, of Eythorne, from

Luke, vii. 5; and that in the evening, by the Rev. George Townsend, of Ramsgate, from Mark, vi. 20. The devotional services were conducted by Messrs. Parnell, Martell, and Andrews. This place was built at the sole expense of Mr. Lemon, of Woodnesborough, for the good of his neighbours, and is to be supplied by various ministers. May the Lord crown the benevolent intention of this benefactor with his special blessing in the salvation of sinners.

LOUGHBOROUGH.

In November, 1815, a church of the particular Baptist denomination was formed in this populous town, a small place of worship having been previously erected for its accommodation.* The Lord has so far prospered this infant interest, that a more enlarged structure has, in the course of the present year, been erected, 45 feet by 39, which was opened August 13, just two years from the time of opening the first place. On this occasion, the Rev. Messrs. Griffin, of London; Edmonds, of Cambridge; and Jarman, of Nottingham, preached. Messrs. Birt, of Derby; and Peters, of Sheepshead, engaged in the devotional parts of the service. On the ensuing Lord's-day, the Rev. R. Hall, of Leicester, preached. The congregations were numerous and respectable each day, and liberal contributions were made toward defraying the expense of the building. Pleasing prospects (under a Divine blessing) present, of the increase and respectability of this rising cause.

LITTLE WILD-STREET, LONDON.

On Wednesday, the 22d Oct. the Baptist meeting-house in Little Wild-street having been shut up for enlargement, was re-opened for divine worship. Three sermons were delivered; that in the morning by the Rev. E. Parsons, of Leeds; that in the afternoon, by the Rev. T. Edmonds, of Cambridge; and that in the evening, by the Rev. F. A. Cox, of Hackney.

We understand that these alterations have chiefly been made for the accommodation of the *children of the Sunday school*, and the *poor who attended the field preaching* on the Lord's-day mornings during the summer; and that for the benefit of such, Mr. Edwards intends immediately commencing a Lord's-day evening lecture, to continue during the

* See our Magazine for June, 1816

winter season, in the above-mentioned meeting-house; service to begin at half-past six o'clock.

ORDINATIONS.

IRELAND—NEWRY.

IN compliance with a pressing request received by the Committee of the Baptist Irish Society from Newry, in the north of Ireland, Mr. C. T. Keen, (late a student at Stepney Academy) has been sent to that populous town, containing 16,000 inhabitants. He was publicly designated to the office of a missionary for Ireland at Maze-pond meeting, on Tuesday, October 14, 1817. His tutor, Dr. Newman, gave him a suitable charge, from Ezekiel, iii. 1. The other ministers engaged were Messrs. Cox, Griffin, Hoby, Button, and Iwimey. Mr. Keen's confession of faith, and the statement of his motives for wishing to spend his life in Ireland, were very gratifying to the large congregation assembled on this occasion.

PARADISE-STREET, CHELSEA.

ON Wednesday, October 22, 1817, the newly-formed church of the particular Baptist denomination, assembling at Paradise-row chapel, Chelsea, was publicly recognised, and Mr. O. Clarke, previously a member of the church in Fetter-lane, late under the care of the Rev. A. Austin, was set apart to the pastoral office. Mr. Elvey, of Fetter-lane, read the scriptures, and prayed; Mr. G. Pritchard, of Keppel-street, delivered the introductory discourse, in which he described the principles and conduct of a gospel-church; after which he called upon the members of the church to signify their union, asked the usual questions, and received Mr. Clarke's confession of faith. Mr. Penny, late of Portsea, prayed the ordination-prayer, with imposition of hands; Dr. Newman, President of the Baptist Academy, Stepney, then gave the charge, from 1 Peter, v. 1 to 4; Mr. Hoby, of Maze-pond, preached to the people, from 1 Cor. iii. 9; Mr. Dunn, of Pimlico, concluded in prayer; Messrs. Morrison, Bunce, Pinchback, and E. N. Sloper, (Independent ministers,) gave out the hymns. The services were peculiarly interesting, and it is hoped the Lord was amongst his people of a truth, and that the impression made will not soon be obliterated.

THE LATE HARVEST.

MANY serious persons have been surprised that the government of our country have not appointed a Day of Thanksgiving to Almighty God, for his great goodness towards the nation, and the world, in the late abundant harvest. Our churches may, notwithstanding, appoint a day for their own observation.

It has been suggested by some respectable correspondents in Wales, that if "the morning of the SECOND THURSDAY in November were appointed to celebrate the mercy and favour of the Lord on that account, that the Magazine will have been sufficiently circulated in the country to give proper notice." It would be pleasant for all our churches to meet at the same time, to "praise the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song."

Poetry.

GOD INCOMPREHENSIBLE.

Translated from Racine.

SPRUNG from the dust, the creature of an hour,
Man, vainly wise, and boasting of his power,
Would fain explore the secrets of his God,
And search the splendours of his high abode.
But cease, vain man, nor wonder if you find
In Nature's page, for thy contracted mind,
Myst'ries too great, too glorious, and profound,
For mortal intellect, or thought, to sound.

Past ages on her opening leaves have gaz'd,
Pleas'd with their beauties, with their depths amaz'd;

They read the letters which compos'd the name
Of the great Builder of her glorious frame,
But Nature's God, to man has ne'er reveal'd
The vast designs through all her parts conceal'd.

Approach her temple, its inscription read—
"Forbear, rash man, still further to proceed;
Retire—nor with a bold, presumptuous pride,
Presume to unravel what to thee's denied.
For He who holds the whirlwinds in his hand,
And chains the raging billows to the strand,
Has fixt the boundaries to human sight,
Past which no mortal e'er can wing his flight."
To fathom Nature, man in vain essays,
Dark are her paths, and intricate her ways.
He views the grandeur of the vast machine,
But, lo! the hand that guides it is unseen.

Nature repeats her call, her voice attend,
"Adore, O man, thy Maker and thy Friend;
His glorious works contemplate and admire,
And learn to bound ambition's vain desire;
Enjoy the blessings which his hands bestow,
And bless the Great Unknown, from whom they flow.

Ignorant and blind, forbear to try thy skill
To unveil the secrets of his sov'reign will:
All thy researches leave thee where thou art,
For God shall all thy puny efforts thwart."
"You blush, proud mortal, and would feign deny
The truths I utter, but forbear reply:
Contented rest, since here precluded more,
Wond'ring to love, and loving to adore."

Oxford.

LOREB.

* * The two last lines are quoted from an English poet, and embrace the idea contained in the French.